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THE

# MUSEUM

OF

# RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE:

DESIGNED TO

## ILLUSTRATE RELIGIOUS TRUTH.

EDITED BY

MARCUS E. CROSS.

---

*Religion's* all. Descending from the skies
To wretched man, the goddess in her *left*
Holds out *this* world, and in her *right* the *next*.
Religion! Providence! an after state!
Here is firm footing; here is solid rock!
This can support us; all is sea besides.
His eye the good man fastens on the skies
And bids earth roll, nor feels her idle whirl.

*Young.*

"Est brevitate opus ut currat sententia."
Let brevity despatch the rapid thought.

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STEREOTYPED BY L. JOHNSON.....PHILADELPHIA.

# PREFACE.

In the preparation of this little volume, the editor has desired to consult particularly the circumstances of a numerous portion of the community who have but little time for *extended* investigation on any subject. Immersed in various kinds of business, and engaged in the stirring scenes of life, they are not inclined to wade through huge volumes to winnow out the wheat from the chaff, and thus to get valuable knowledge. They will seize hold of a small volume which conveys important truth in an interesting manner, and will read it with interest, and lay up valuable facts, maxims, and principles, for future use.

At the same time that he has desired to furnish such a collection of articles as convey important truth, in an interesting and engaging style, he would do nothing to vitiate the taste of the age. He would carefully exclude every false principle, and every thing calculated to dissipate the mind, and lead it away from the great end of its being. "He would unite holiness to the Lord under all that is beautiful and picturesque, majestic and sublime in nature. He would have every garland and chaplet which the literature of the country weaves, composed of the fragrant leaves of the tree of life."

The only merit which the editor claims for his own pieces is that which arises from the intrinsic importance of the subjects themselves. Prepared, as they have been, in a short time, and amid other pressing engagements, he is far from supposing that he has done justice to the discussion of the subjects. But he believes that *truth*, and important principles, are presented in them, though perhaps in some cases buried in rubbish.

The union of *moral* and *religious* culture with *mental*, which the editor has discussed in one article, is a subject of surpassing interest at this day of feverish excitement, hurried action, and skeptical influence. The writer has only touched on a few of the great principles connected with this subject, just *sufficient* to show how *vital* is this principle of education in its bearings on the wel-

fare of individuals and nations. If we would shun the rock on which other republics have split, we must enthrone in the hearts of our people the sacred influence of the Bible.

But why write any thing more about China? Have not too many books been *already* written in relation to that people? To such inquiries I would reply: In the first place, China is assuming great importance as a field of missionary exertions; and it is highly important that correct information be spread out extensively before the people, and in various ways, in regard to that immense empire; and that the church, which is slumbering over a perishing world, be roused to the discharge of her duty in respect to those teeming millions, who are "perishing for lack of vision." In the next place, though much has been ably written on this subject, yet it is spread over so vast a surface, that comparatively few will ever take the trouble to gather it up, and bring it before the mind in such a way as to make a distinct impression. The editor has thought that an article which should imbody the most interesting facts and views in relation to the condition and prospects of China, in a form accessible to all, and requiring but a few hours' attention, was a desideratum at this time. He very cheerfully admits his incompetency to do full justice to the plan; but if it should only have the effect to awaken a *deeper interest* in the cause of missions in a *few* minds, he will feel richly repaid for his labour.

The articles from other writers are on important subjects; and the principal part of them from the pens of those who have established a high reputation as authors in the department of Christian literature. Their views are sound, and they have handled their themes in an able and interesting manner.

In the selection of materials for this work, the editor has not confined himself to any section of the Christian church, which should give it the appearance of a sectarian work. He would repudiate that narrow spirit that looks upon Christian societies as rival empires, each aiming to raise *itself* on the ruins of *the others*; and would cherish a spirit of Christian union and liberality.

To the blessing of that Being, under whose guidance the feeblest instrumentality may secure the choicest moral influences, he commits this little book, with the humble hope that in the great day it may unfold *some* blessed results on *immortal minds*.

M. E. C.

*Philadelphia.*

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# No. I.

## THE PRE-EMINENT VALUE OF THE BIBLE.

AN ADDRESS AT RUTGERS COLLEGE,

BY ALEXANDER H. EVERETT.

---

Gentlemen of the Societies,

The occasion which has called us together, and which, by your appointment, has devolved upon me the agreeable, though arduous task of addressing you, is one of a deeply interesting character. For those of you who are more immediately concerned in the ceremonies of the day, it marks the dividing line between the walks of studious and active life. Thus far you have pursued your course under the eye of affectionate and careful friends, of tender parents, or watchful guardians and tutors. Their experience and love have supplied the want of the mature judgment which your youth denied you, and have brought you safely through many perils, to the portals of the great theatre of the world. To-day you pass the threshold. No longer looking up to others with implicit faith as the guides of your course, and as mainly responsible for its direction towards good or evil, you are now to go forward as independent, self-directed, self-sustaining men; to discharge the duties, to encounter the labours and perils, and to reap the rewards and honours which may have been reserved for you. Like some gallant ship, bound for distant regions, and freighted with a rich cargo, which the care of her owners has provided with all the necessary stores, and safely towed out of harbour, you this day spread your canvass to the breeze, and launch out boldly upon the broad ocean of life.

But though you are now to go forth and pursue your course as independent responsible men, you go not forth

alone. The friends, whose care and kindness watched over your earlier years, are still to accompany and aid you as counsellors. They are now assembled to witness, with affectionate and eager interest, your departure from the retreats of preparatory study, and to welcome you to the open field of manly exertion. They are to co-operate with you in its toils; to sustain you, as far as may be, in its perils; to sympathize with you in good and in evil fortune. As you advance in life, new relations of a dearer and tenderer kind than any that you have yet formed await you. A home of your own creation—the true temple of happiness and virtue—will receive you into its charmed circle, and bind you with new and delightful ties to your brother men. It is also your fortune to have your birth in a land of equal laws, and of wise and well-administered political institutions. Your country spreads over you her broad protecting shield, to guard you from all injustice or oppression at home or abroad; secures to you unimpaired the fruits of your industry; lays open to your enterprise, unfettered by monopoly or privilege, every branch of useful and honourable labour, and holds out to your noble ambition her highest places of trust and honour as the rewards of zealous and successful exertion in her service. In a still more elevated sphere, the All-seeing Eye watches over you with a love surpassing that of friends, parents, or protectors, and will make all changes and chances work together for good for those who love him and keep his commandments.

It is, therefore, under happiest auspices, gentlemen and friends, that you this day go forth from the shades of academic retirement to the walks of busy life. You go forth, as well you may, with fresh and buoyant spirits. You look forward with hope and confidence to the future. To the eye of ingenuous youth the world appears in prospect like some enchanted landscape of perennial verdure, adorned with fairest roses, and glittering with the fresh dews of the morning.

> "Fair laughs the morn, and soft the zephyr blows,
> While proudly riding o'er the azure realm,
> In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes,
> Youth at the prow, and Pleasure at the helm."

For you, gentlemen, may no clouds overspread this bright prospect! May no disappointment blast the promise of so fresh a spring! May the highest hopes and wishes of your

friends be more than realized in your future course! May your country hereafter register your names among those of her worthy and well-beloved children! And may the great Being, in whose hands are the issues of all events, receive you, on the final day of account, to the rewards of good and faithful servants!

In executing the task which you have assigned me, I would gladly say something to enforce upon your minds the motives to upright and honourable conduct that result from the various considerations to which I have now alluded. Of these motives, the highest, the purest, and, if duly weighed, the most effective and powerful, are those which are founded in religion. When we view the mind, not as a mere ephemeral form of matter, but as a substantial intelligence,—kindred in some sense, as we are permitted to say, to the High and Holy One that inhabiteth eternity,—every pleasure, care, and duty, presents itself under a new aspect; the ordinary temptations to vice lose their charm; the passing troubles of the world are divested of their sting; and a celestial day-spring illuminates the otherwise dark and dreary chaos of human existence. A full exposition of the nature of the religious motives to good conduct, would, however, be hardly appropriate to the present occasion, and still less so to the studies and pursuits of the present speaker. It belongs to the habitual duties of the sacred desk. The objects of our meeting are of a literary character, and naturally suggest for our reflections a theme of the same description. In accordance with this suggestion, and with a view, at the same time, to the high importance of religious influences on the minds of the young, I propose to offer, in the present address, a few remarks upon the literary and scientific character of the Scriptures. These ancient records, that imbody for us the religious spirit which, we may hope, is not entirely foreign to other forms of faith, are venerable and interesting under every point of view. Their most important aspect is that under which they are considered as the symbols and assurances of divine truth; but regarded merely as literary monuments, they are not only the most ancient and curious, but, I may safely say, the most extraordinary and valuable in the whole compass of literature. "Independently of the divine origin of the Scriptures," says the accomplished and clear-headed Sir William Jones, "I have found in them more true wisdom,

more practical good sense, a warmer benevolence, and a higher strain of thought and poetry than I have met with in any other work that I have perused, or indeed all other works put together." In this opinion I entirely concur. On a subject so extensive you will, of course, not expect a complete and regular disquisition. I can only offer a few imperfect hints, which, for the sake of some appearance of method, I will arrange under the three heads into which the illustrious Bacon divides the whole field of learning, Philosophy, Poetry, and History.

1. The philosophy of the Scriptures is at once sublime and simple. It satisfies the highest aspirations of the highest minds, and it falls within the comprehension of the humblest inquirer who honestly seeks to understand it. It embraces the material universe, with its glories and complicated system of

> "——planets, suns, and adamantine spheres,
> Wheeling unshaken through the void immense;"

the moral world, where the ruling spirits of good and evil carry on a perpetual warfare, with alternate, and apparently not unequal advantage;—the great problems that have attracted, exercised, and defied the severest study of generation after generation:—it embraces them both with unshrinking grasp, and solves them with a single word. It carries home the sublime truth to the simple heart of the common believer with a clearness of conviction that Socrates and Cicero in their happiest hours of inspiration never knew. This word of power that solves these mighty and momentous problems, that carries home this cheering conviction to the believing heart,—need I say to you, gentlemen,—is God!

When from the merely spontaneous exercise of our intellectual and physical powers, we must turn the mind inward to reflection upon its own nature, and outward to an inquiring contemplation of the objects around us, we find ourselves part and parcel of a vast system. We ask with intense curiosity, with agonizing interest, "What am I? Whence came I? What means this glorious panorama of ocean, air, and earth that I see around me,—these splendid orbs that illuminate the day and night,—these lesser lights that twinkle and burn around them,—the seasons with their ever-changing round? Who can tell me the secret of the being and working of this wondrous machinery? Did necessity

fix it firmly, as it is, from all eternity? Has accident thrown it together to remain till some other accident shall reduce it to nothing, or did some master-workman adapt it, with intelligent design, to some great and good end? If so, what means this dismal shade of evil that overshadows with its dim eclipse so large a portion of this good and fair creation? What relation do I bear individually to the grand whole? Am I a mere ripple on the boundless ocean of being, swelling into life for a moment and then subsiding forever, or is this curiously compacted frame the abode of a substantial, immortal mind, destined to exist hereafter through countless ages of happiness or misery?"

The greatest and wisest men of all ages and countries, have undertaken to answer these questions in various ways, but generally with slender success. One tells us that the origin of all things is in water, another that it is in fire; a third places it in the earth, and a fourth in the air. Epicurus resolves the universe into primitive atoms, while Zeno fixes it firmly in the brazen bonds of necessity. In regard to the problem of the moral world, opinions are equally various. In one system fate is the supreme arbiter, and chance is another. Some acknowledge the existence of gods, but place them apart in some remote celestial sphere, where they live on, regardless of the stir and bustle of this lower world. A few, more wise than the rest, obtain some faint glimpse of the truth, of which, however, they avow that they feel no certain assurance. All is doubt, uncertainty, error. There is no absurdity so great, says Cicero, that some distinguished philosopher has not made it the basis of his theory. The labours of modern inquirers have not been attended with better results. They have terminated in reviving successfully, one after another, the exploded follies of antiquity. One denies the existence of mind, and another that of matter, while a third doubts the reality of either. All—I mean all whose researches have been conducted independently of Scripture—deny the reality of moral distinctions, and reduce man to a level with the animals around him. Such are the noble and consolatory views which the wisdom of Europe proclaimed within our own day, through the mouths of her ablest and most judicious apostles, as the last results of the labours of all preceding ages upon the great problem of God, man, and the universe.

If we turn to the teachers of the various religions, the scene is, if possible, still less agreeable. Stocks and stones; the beasts of the field, and the fowls of the air; the vilest reptiles; nay, the very vegetable products that serve for daily food, are held up by the most learned and civilized nations as objects of reverence and arbiters of human fortune. Enlightened Egypt, in her brightest days of power, wisdom, and glory, enrolled the beetle and the onion on the list of her divinities. The mythology of Hindostan is, if possible, still more monstrous. Revolting or childish fables are presented as solutions of the great problem of the universe. The world reposes on the back of an elephant, and the elephant, again, upon a tortoise, which finally rests upon nothing. Even in the elegant creations of the brilliant fancy of Greece, we discern little more than the sports of infancy playing in wantonness with ideas, of the importance of which it is utterly unconscious. In its severer moods, the Greek mythology presents the most desolating views of the destiny and character of our race. Take, for example, the fable of Prometheus:—On the side of a rocky precipice of immeasurable height, a human being extends his giant length, writhing in agonies of extremest torture. Chains of iron attach him to the cliff, while a vulture of enormous size, hovering over him, perpetually tears his entrails, which are constantly renewed by the supernatural fiat of destiny. This is the Titan Prometheus, as described by the gloomy genius of Eschylus. His crime was, that he had given life to human figures of clay of his own formation, by touching them with fire which he had stolen from heaven. He is intended as an emblem of humanity. The moral is, that wretchedness is the lot of man, and that superiority of intellect, though employed for the most beneficial objects, only dooms its possessor to intenser misery. The wayward genius of Byron, who had chiefly sought for speculative truth in the sources to which I have alluded above, was captivated by this heart-rending fable, which he seems to have regarded as the vehicle of important truth, and has dressed it up in some of his finest poetry.

"Titan! to whose immortal eyes
The sorrows of mortality,
Seen in their sad reality,
Were not as things that gods despise:

What was thy pity's recompense?
A suffering, silent, but intense:
The rock, the vulture, and the chain:
All that the proud can feel of pain;
The agony they do not show,
The suffocating sense of wo,
That speaks but in its loneliness,—
And then is silent, lest the sky
Should have a listener, nor will sigh
Unless its voice be echoless."

All the errors, absurdities, and fables to which I have now alluded, have been sustained and illustrated in ancient and in modern times, with the whole power of the human understanding in its most improved condition. Eloquence, logic, learning, and wit, have been employed to make the worse appear the better reason, until the honest inquirer, who seeks for truth through the mazes of these controversies, finds himself completely bewildered and hopeless of arriving at any satisfactory result, were there no other difficulty to be encountered but the extent of the ground to be gone over. To crown the whole, the severest and most celebrated metaphysician of modern times affirms, that the truth cannot, in fact, be discovered by the mere use of the understanding in the ordinary sense of the term; and in proof of his assertion furnishes what he considers complete and unanswerable demonstrations on both sides of all the great questions that most deeply interest the mind, at the head of which is the existence of God.

From the chaos of controversy, doubt, confusion, imposture, and error, we turn to the Scriptures. Here, gentlemen, we find ourselves at once in a new atmosphere. The very first sentence removes all difficulty. What do I say? The light breaks upon us before the sentence is finished. The first half-sentence settles at once and forever the great problem of the universe. IN THE BEGINNING GOD. No metaphysics; no logic; no rhetoric; no tedious induction from particular facts; no laboured demonstration *à priori* or *à posteriori;* no display of learning; no appeal to authority,—but just the plain, simple, naked, unsophisticated truth: IN THE BEGINNING GOD.

With the utterance of this little word, an ocean of light and splendour bursts at once upon the universe, and penetrates its darkest recesses with living beams of hope and joy. Order, harmony, intelligent design for happiest ends, take

the place of unintelligible chaos and wild confusion. A cheerful confidence in the wisdom and goodness of an All-Wise and Almighty Creator, is substituted for gloomy doubt and blank despair. Evil still remains, but how different is its character! In a universe of chance and fate, it is a blind, irresistible power, like the destiny of ancient fable: treading under its giant feet with remorseless fury, the fairest flowers of the natural and moral creation. "In a godless universe," says Madame de Stael, "the fall of a sparrow would be a fit subject for endless and inconsolable sorrow." With an Almighty Father at the helm, evil, physical and moral, puts on the character of discipline. We cannot, it is true, penetrate the necessity of its existence, or the nature of the good which it is intended to effect. We are tempted at first to exclaim with the eloquent sophist of Geneva, "Benevolent Being! where, then, is thy almighty power, I behold evil on the earth." But what then? Does our limited intelligence comprehend the universe? Can the infant at his mother's breast understand why the honied stream is removed from his lips, and a bitter draught of medicine substituted for it? Does the little child realize why the kind father confines him in schools,—refuses him the indulgences which he thinks so delightful, inflicts upon him, perhaps, a severe punishment for some, to him, unimaginable fault? To the child, the lapse of a few years makes all these mysteries clear; in the mean time, his confidence and love for his parents induce him to submit with undiminished cheerfulness, where he cannot understand. Shall the frail being of a day repose with less faith and hope upon the bosom of Omniscient and Omnipotent goodness? How beautiful is the language, in which a late English writer expressed the effect upon the inquiring mind, oppressed with doubts and fears, of the introduction of an intelligent principle into the theory of the universe.

"Foreshadows—say, rather, foresplendours of that truth, and beginning of truths, fell mysteriously upon my soul. Sweeter than day-spring to the shipwrecked in Nova Zembla;—ah! like a mother's voice to her little child, that strays bewildered, weeping in unknown tumults;—like soft streamings of celestial music to my too exasperated heart, came that Evangile: the universe is not dead and demoniacal—a charnel-house with spectres, but godlike, and my Father's."

In the beginning God. This little phrase, then, gentlemen, solves in one word the problem of the universe. The same strain of thought runs through the whole volume; but if it ended here, the system of speculative wisdom would be perfect. It suffers no subtraction: it admits no addition. In the beginning God.

But knowledge is not every thing. We are not only intelligent, but active beings. A complete system of philosophy must include the essence of practical, as well as speculative wisdom. Satisfied upon the theory of the universe, I turn my views again homeward. I seek for a rule of practical conduct. What are my relations to the beings around me? How am I to act? What am I to do? Here, too, the schools are given up to inextricable doubt, disputation, and confusion; and here again, the Scriptures interpose with another masterly solution, in a single word: Love.

Interrogate the doctors, and you find their answers as various as their names. All agree in this: that the object in life is happiness, but how shall I attain it? Wherein resides this long-sought *summum bonum:* this far-famed *fair-and-good*, of the Porch and the Academy? Zeno stretches the inquireron therack, and endeavours to persuade him that he is happy, by convincing him that pain is not an evil. Epicurus unlocks the blooming gardens of sensual indulgence. Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die. "Wonder at nothing," says Horace, "that is the only way by which a man can make or keep himself happy." The son of Ammon seeks for happiness in the "pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war," and weeps at last that he has only one world to conquer. The student thinks that he has found it in his library. "When I am once fairly seated before a fine old parchment," says the disciple in Goethe's Faust, "all Paradise opens before me." But the master has already learned that of making many books there is no end; and that much study is a weariness of the flesh. And what says the sweet songster of Twickenham,—the charming poet of the Essay on Man:—he whose life, according to a brother bard, was an even more endearing song than his writings; and who, if this eulogy be true, had a right to judge of that in which he himself excelled? Hear him addressing his celebrated "guide, philosopher and friend!"

"O, Happiness! our being's end and aim:
Good! Pleasure! Ease! Content! whate'er thy name:
That something still that prompts the eternal sigh,
For which we bear to live or dare to die;
Which still around us yet beyond us lies,—
O'erlook'd,—seen double,—by the fool and wise.
Plant of celestial growth! if dropp'd below,
Say in what mortal soil thou deign'st to grow!
Fair opening to some court's propitious shrine,
Or deep with diamonds in the flaming mine?
Twined with the wreaths Parnassian laurels yield,
Or reap'd with iron harvests of the field?
Where grows? where grows it not? If vain the toil,
We ought to blame the culture, not the soil.
Fix'd to no spot is happiness sincere;
'Tis nowhere to be found or everywhere:
'Tis nowhere to be bought, but always free,
And fled from monarchs, St. John, dwells with thee!"

Beautiful, brilliant, but, alas, too flattering eulogy! No, gentlemen! happiness never dwelt in that troubled bosom where love of pleasure and ambition reigned supremely to the last. The guide, philosopher, and friend, whom our delightful, but too mistaken moralist has addressed in these beautiful verses, was never happy for a moment: no, not even in that hour of triumph when he gave the law as prime minister of England over half the globe,—when his eloquence ruled in parliament,—when the seductive charm of his person and manner captivated all hearts in the saloon, and when the greatest wits and poets of England were proud to share the retirement of his leisure hours, and exhausted their finest strains of eloquence and song in his praise. Still less was he happy, when the charming Minstrel of the "Essay on Man," composed under his instruction, and dedicated to him that celebrated poem; and when fallen from his high estate, attainted of treason, barely permitted, after years of exile and poverty, to breathe his native air, and till his paternal acres, he destroyed the quiet which he might have enjoyed by unavailing efforts to grasp the glittering baubles which in his brilliant youth he had so easily won and so early lost; and by efforts still less pardonable, and happily not less unavailing, to disturb the religious faith of his countrymen. No, gentlemen! happiness dwells not in the propitious shine of courts, nor yet in the flaming depths of the diamond mine. It is not to be conquered on the battle-field; nor is it gathered in, as the bard of Twickenham knew too well by his own ex-

perience, with the richest harvest of Parnassian laurels. But the error lies still deeper. Happiness is not, as it is here represented, "our being's end and aim." The object of life is improvement, progress, preparation for an infinite future. Happiness, so far as we enjoy it in this mingled state of being, is the indirect result of employing the proper means to effect these objects. Abandon then, gentlemen, the poet's treacherous guide, who was a wretched philosopher, and at best a very doubtful friend, Open the Scriptures, and you will there find that rule of practical conduct which he vainly sought to establish in so many beautiful, but too unsuccessful moral essays, revealed with unerring certainty in a single word: "I give unto you a new commandment, that ye LOVE ONE ANOTHER."

What says the beautiful and original writer whom I just now quoted?

"There is in man a higher than love of happiness: he can do without happiness, and find blessedness. Was it not to preach forth this same Higher, that sages and martyrs, the priest, and the poet, in all times have spoken and suffered, bearing testimony through life and through death, to the *Godlike* that is in man; and that in the *Godlike* only he hath strength and freedom? On the roaring billows of time thou art not ingulfed, but borne aloft to the azure of eternity. Love not pleasure;—love God!

"Small is it that thou canst trample under foot the world with its injuries, as old Greek Zeno taught thee. Thou mayst love the world with its injuries and because of its injuries. For this a greater than Zeno was needed, and he too was sent. Our highest Orpheus walked in Judea eighteen hundred years ago. His sphere-melody, flowing in wild, native tones, took captive the ravished souls of men; and being of a truth sphere-melody, still flows and sounds, though now with thousand-fold accompaniments and rich symphonies, through all our hearts, and modulates and divinely leads them. Sweep away the illusion of time. Glance, if thou hast eyes, from the near-moving cause to the far-distant mover. O! could I transport thee direct from the beginnings to the endings, how were thy eyesight unsealed and thy heart set flaming in a light sea of celestial wonder. Then sawest thou that through every star,—through every grass-blade,—and most of all, through every living soul the glory of a present God still beams:—that

this fair universe, were it in the meanest portion thereof, is in very deed the star-domed city of God!"

Such, gentlemen, is the *philosophy* of the Scriptures;—a complete code of practical and speculative wisdom in two little words: a philosophy, original, profound, sublime: and, at the same time, clear to the common understanding, satisfactory to every uncorrupted heart. You will perceive, that I speak of this philosophy, not as a doctrine resting on the authority of Divine revelation, and recommended as such to our respect and belief. I look at it merely in its own intrinsic character, and point out to you the originality, completeness, and evident self-demonstrating truth, which distinguish it in both its parts from all the other systems which have engaged the attention of men. Let us now look for a moment at the *poetry* of the Bible.

II. Here, gentlemen, we find ourselves at once in the midst of a new world of wonders. Poetry, in all its highest departments of sublimity, pathos, and beauty, is scattered through the pages of the sacred volume with a profusion, which we look for in vain in any other quarter. Here, too, "the highest heaven of invention," to use the language of Shakspeare, opens upon us at the very threshold. *God said, Let there be light, and there was light.* What power of thought! What simplicity of language! The greatest critic of antiquity pronounces this passage, as I need not remind you, the finest specimen of the sublime which he had anywhere met with. Consider for a moment the variety and vastness of the images compressed into this little sentence;—a universe weltering in blind and formless chaos;—the breath of God moving mysteriously over the confused mass;—the word of power issuing unspoken from the depths of the Almighty mind, and followed instantaneously by the presence of the new and brilliant element. The least of these ideas would furnish a common poet with pages of rhetoric. The record of creation compresses them all into a single line. *God said, Let there be light, and there was light.* How tame in comparison with this is even the splendid versification of the minstrel of Paradise Lost!

> "God said, Let there be light! and forthwith light
> Ethereal, first of things, creation pure,
> Sprang from the east, and through the azure vault
> To journey on its airy course began."

Through this magnificent entrance we approach the blooming abode of our first parents. How charming, and yet how mysterious and mournful, considered merely under a poetical point of view, is this ancient eclogue! Here again how various, and yet how striking are the images and thoughts expressed in a few short paragraphs! A new race of beings, created by the will of God and formed after his image ;—their innocence and happiness;—the freshness and beauty of the garden that is given them for a residence, with its various vegetable products, including the wondrous trees of knowledge and of life;—the celestial beings, not excepting the great creating Power himself, who disdains not to visit these yet unpolluted haunts in the cool of the evening;—the insidious foe of man, sin, intruding itself by stealth into this abode of bliss, and turning all its beauty into bitterness ;—finally, the sad reverse ;—the departure of the exiled pair, and the messenger of God stationed with his sword of flame at the gate of Eden to prevent their return. What a picture! The highest reach of the human intellect in poetry, the Paradise Lost, is, I need not say, the mere filling up of this splendid outline ;—a filling up, completed—we might almost believe, from its perfection—with more than ordinary aid from that Divine Spirit, which the sublime minstrel invokes with so much earnestness at the outset.

> " Chiefly thou, great Spirit! that dost prefer
> Before all places the upright heart and pure,
> Assist me, for thou know'st : Thou from the first
> Wast present, and with mighty wings outstretch'd,
> Dove-like, sat'st brooding o'er the vast abyss,
> And madest it pregnant : what in me is dark
> Illumine: what is low raise and support;
> That, to the height of this great argument,
> I may assert eternal Providence,
> And justify the ways of God to man."

The same height of poetical excellence is sustained through every part of the Scriptures. The limits of the occasion prevent me from going into detail; nor is it necessary upon a subject so familiar to you. Let me barely recall to your remembrance the charming narrative of the life of Joseph, which combines with the strongest internal evidence of its literal truth all the interest of the most pathe-

tic romance ;—the beautiful pastoral of Ruth ;—the sublime tragedy of Job ;—the splendid lyrical effusions of the earlier and later bards that are scattered like gems over the rich groundwork of the historical and prophetical books ;—the treasures of thought concentrated in the Proverbs ;—the impassioned tenderness that breathes through the love songs of Solomon ;—finally, and above all, the magnificent productions of the " Monarch Minstrel " himself ;—a collection of odes, unequalled, unapproached, I may say, even in mere literary merit, in any other language ; odes before which Pindar and Horace, and the modern lyrical poets of highest fame hide their diminished heads ; odes, whose essential power and beauty, no dress, however unworthy, can wholly disguise—which even in the bald imitations of the modern versifiers thrill with delight, and exalt with religious rapture every feeling heart in the whole population of Christendom.

It would be impossible, as I remarked just now, to discuss, however summarily, on the present occasion, all the various topics suggested by this brilliant and extended series of literary works. In order to fix our ideas, let us, nevertheless, bring before us for a moment, a detached passage from this grand national library—this encyclopedia, for such it may, in fact, be called, of Hebrew literature. Take, for example, the lament of David upon the death of Saul and Jonathan. There are few incidents in the course of human affairs more affecting than the fall of a young warrior in battle. Who among us has not felt his heart melt within him like water, at the recollection of the fate of our own Warren, cut off prematurely in the bloom of youth and beauty on the first and last of his fields ? Jonathan was the beloved friend of David. For Saul, to whom he was indebted in the first instance for his political advancement, although he had afterwards much reason to complain of the causeless jealousy and even persecution of the wayward king, he had ever cherished the sentiments of respect and gratitude, which were natural, under such circumstances, to his generous and elevated character. Their fall awakens all his feelings ; and he pours them out with the pure taste and concentrated power that belong to his style, in perhaps the most touching of all his poems.

" The beauty of Israel is slain upon his high places ! How are the mighty fallen !

"Tell it not in Gath! Publish it not in the streets of Askelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.

"Ye mountains of Gilboa! let there be no dew, neither rain upon you, nor fruits for offerings! for there the shield of the mighty one was vilely cast away; the shield of Saul as if he had not been anointed with oil.

"From the blood of the slain, from the battle of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not back, the sword of Saul returned not empty.

"Saul and Jonathan were loving and pleasant in their lives, and in their deaths they were not divided. They were swifter than eagles: they were stronger than lions.

"Ye daughters of Israel! weep over Saul, who clothed you in scarlet, who put ornaments of gold upon your apparel!

"How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O, Jonathan! thou wast slain on thy high places.

"I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan! very dear hast thou been unto me; thy love for me was wonderful, passing the love of women.

"How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!"

III. Such, gentlemen, are the richness and value of the *poetry* of the Bible. I had selected one or two other passages, not inferior to that which I have recited as specimens, but the limits of the occasion compel me to omit them. Let us now, in conclusion, glance for a moment at some portions of the sacred record which belong to the department of *history*.

Here, gentlemen, we find ourselves carried back once more to the opening passage, which I have already cited, as imbodying the essence of the *philosophy* of the Bible, and exhibiting, at the same time, in the judgment of the most celebrated critics, the noblest example of the sublime in *poetry*. It is also the record of the most important facts in the history of the world. The creation from nothing of the unformed elements of the universe;—their separation and arrangement;—the origin of man;—the introduction of the deadly power of sin—its gradual prevalence throughout the extended population of the earth, and the final submersion of a guilty race under the waters of a universal deluge;—these are the grand physical and moral revolutions that occupy the first chapters of the Bible. In all this, gentlemen, there is much that transcends the bounds of human reason. The existence of a great, uncreated mind;—creation;—the presence of evil in a system formed and governed by Omniscient and Almighty goodness, are facts beyond our comprehension. What then? Can we comprehend the least of the ordinary operations of nature that are going

on around us? Is not the act of my own will by which I lift my arm as incomprehensible as the existence of God? Is not the articulate voice that bursts from my own lips, as great a miracle to me as the word of power that raised a universe out of nothing? We are surrounded on all sides by mystery. The dew-drop that glitters in the morning sunbeam, the animalculæ floating in it, whose existence can only be detected by a microscope, are each a miniature world of wonders. Why, then, should we be surprised that a veil of mystery, which human reason seeks in vain to penetrate, overhangs the cradle of the universe? Let us rather be surprised at the presumption of beings who attempt with their little limited intelligence to grasp infinity. Suffice it to say, that the results of experience, when they bear upon the Scripture record, entirely concur with it. The chronology of the different nations of the old world, though in some cases apparently at variance with that of the Bible, is found on more correct examination to confirm it. The last and most thorough researches in geology, conducted by the illustrious Cuvier, verify in the minutest particulars the Scripture account of the great revolutions of the globe.

From these grand and mysterious events, we pass to others of a different character. After unfolding the wonders of creation, the Scripture record takes up a less extensive but still most interesting theme, the history of the Hebrew nation, the most remarkable that has ever appeared upon the earth. We trace it through the successive periods of its origin, progress, and maturity to its final destruction. The commencement carries us back to a beautiful scene of pastoral simplicity. We behold the venerable patriarchs encamped in Arab fashion on the green banks of the Jordan. As the setting sun illuminates the landscape with its ruddy glow, we see them seated in the doors of their white tents to contemplate its glory. Their sons and daughters—their kindred, domestics, and friends—are gathered around them. Flocks and herds are returning from their distant pastures. Every thing indicates repose, abundance, and simple happiness. In the background of the picture, we discern, approaching slowly, a youth of comely appearance accompanying a fair maiden and their attendants. It is the son of the Patriarch. He went forth to meditate at eventide, and he has met the promised bride whom the care of

his affectionate parents has provided for him. Her love shall console him for the loss of his mother. As she reaches the tent, the young men and maidens crowd with delight around the expected guest; the Patriarch receives her with grave cordiality, and a general joy pervades the whole encampment.

What a charming spectacle! These celebrated plains of Palestine, afterwards the seat of so many rich and powerful cities, the scenes of so many wondrous and world-important events, are at this time frequented only by a few tribes of wandering shepherds. So pure are the lives of the patriarchs, that the messengers of heaven condescend at times, as of old in the garden of Eden, to partake their hospitality. Even here, however, sin and misery are not wholly absent. The patriarchal families are disturbed with internal jealousies, and embroiled with troublesome neighbours. They witness with dismay the terrible judgments inflicted on the corrupt cities of the lake. In the mean time, however, their wealth and numbers increase. In the next generation they are surrounded by troops of retainers, maintain relations of peace and war with neighbouring states, and appear already as shepherd princes.

The scene now changes to the banks of the Nile. A famine compels the patriarchal families to take refuge in Egypt, where one of their leaders has already been stationed to prepare the way for them, and by his extraordinary sagacity and purity of conduct, has raised himself from the condition of a slave to that of prime minister. What a contrast in the aspect of every thing around them with the country they have left! Splendid cities, temples, palaces, and obelisks of ever-during granite take the place of the rocky hills and green valleys of Palestine. Instead of the miniature Jordan passing with its slender tide from one lake to another, the magnificent Nile pours, from its undiscovered mountain sources, its swelling flood through a channel of a thousand miles to the ocean. This celebrated stream, which now works its way through masses of ruins, its waters undisturbed by any navigation, except the skiff of the occasional traveller, was then the thoroughfare of business for a large portion of the civilized world. These massive ruins, which even in their forlorn abandonment overwhelm the observer with unmingled wonder, were then, in their complete state, the brilliant abodes of wealth and

luxury, swarming with inhabitants, rich in all the treasures of art and science, which were carried at that time to nearly as high a degree of perfection as they are with us. Thebes, now a granite quarry of roofless walls and broken columns, half buried in sand, was then a mighty metropolis, sending forth, as described by Homer some centuries afterwards, a hundred war-chariots from each of her hundred gates. As the solitary wanderer from Europe now surveys these unequalled monuments, the pyramids, the obelisks with their mysterious hieroglyphical inscriptions, the temples and colonnades measured not by the foot or the yard, but by the league and square mile, he is lost in amazement, and is half tempted to attribute them to some giant race of Titans or Cyclops, far transcending in dimensions and strength the puny beings that now people the globe.

Such was the state of Egypt at the time when the patriarchal families took refuge there. It would be instructive and interesting to trace their history in detail through its subsequent periods, but the limits of the occasion render it impossible, and the theme is already familiar to you. Its outline is too correctly given in the brief sketch by a recent poet of the general history of nations:

> "There is a moral in all human things,
> 'Tis but the sad rehearsal of the past;
> First freedom, and then glory; when these fail,
> Vice,—wealth,—corruption,—barbarism at last."

Adventurous, enterprising, religious in their earlier days, wild and warlike under Joshua, Saul, and David—luxurious under Solomon, the Hebrews soon sink into corruption, and are crushed and carried away captive by the neighbouring states. This catastrophe closes the career of the nation, which can hardly be said to have survived in the miserable remnant who returned from Assyria, and maintained for several centuries a lingering struggle for a wretched provincial existence, which was finally extinguished in blood by the overwhelming power of Rome. The later pages of the sacred record are occupied with the wailings of the exiles over their unhappy destiny,—their lamentations for their lost country,—their stern denunciations of their oppressors, and their glowing prophecies of a future day of greatness and glory, which is to arise in some mysterious way on their posterity;—prophecies, which, I need not

say, the progress of the Christian religion has converted into history.

In what sweet and melting strains the ancient Hebrew lyre echoes the lament of these heart-broken patriots:

"By the rivers of Babylon we sat down and wept; yea, we wept as we remembered Zion."

The skilful, though wayward hand of Byron has called forth from the same instrument a tone of soul-subduing pathos in his Hebrew melodies.

"The wild gazelle on Judah's hills
Exulting yet may bound,
And drink from all the thousand rills
That gush on holy ground.
Her airy step and glorious eye
May pass in tauntless transport by.

A step as fleet, an eye more bright,
Has Judah witnessed there,
And o'er her scenes of lost delight
Inhabitants more fair.
The cedars wave on Lebanon,
But Judah's lovelier maids are gone.

More bless'd each palm that shades her plains
Than Judah's scattered race,
For taking root it there remains
In solitary grace.
It may not quit its place of birth,
It will not thrive in other earth.

But we must wander withering
In other climes to die;
And where our fathers' ashes be,
Our own may never lie.
The temple has not left a stone,
And mockery sits on Salem's throne."

How grand and lofty is the strain in which the bard of Twickenham—sustained for once by an inspiration nobler than his own,—bursts forth, as it were, in spite of himself, into a rapture of sublimity, in depicting after the Hebrew poets the glories of the promised Messiah!

"Rise! crowned with light! imperial Salem, rise!
Exalt thy towering head, and lift thine eyes;
See a long race thy hallowed courts adorn;
See future sons and daughters yet unborn,
In crowding ranks on every side arise,
Demanding life,—impatient for the skies.

See barbarous nations at thy gates attend,
Walk in thy light, and in thy temples bend.
See thy bright altars throng'd with prostrate kings,
And heaped with odours of Sabean springs;
For thee Idume's spicy forests blow,
And seeds of gold on Ophir's mountains glow.
See heaven its sparkling portals wide display,
And burst upon thee as a flood of day.
No more the rising sun shall gild the morn,
Nor evening Cynthia fill her silver horn;
But lost, dissolved in thy superior rays
One tide of glory, one unclouded blaze
O'erflow thy courts: the Light himself shall shine
Revealed, and God's eternal day be thine.
The seas shall waste—the skies in smoke decay,
Rocks fall to dust, and mountains melt away.
But fix'd thy word—thy saving power remains!
Thy realm for ever lasts! thy own Messiah reigns!"

No common verses these, gentlemen! and yet there are persons who tell us that Pope was not a poet. Had he always written thus, I think there could have been but little question about it. Religion, gentlemen, after all, seems to awaken the genius of poetry quite as effectually, as well as to much better purpose, than the praise of war or wine. Her snow-white robe and sparkling diadem, are, methinks a not less attractive vesture for the muse than the rosy chaplets of the banqueting room, or the transparent tissues of the half-uncovered Venus. It would give me pleasure, gentlemen, to dwell more at length on these seductive topics, but the limits of the occasion compel me to hurry to a close. Let us, however, glance for a moment at some of the characters that figure most prominently in the strange eventful history to which I have now so briefly adverted.

What an array, in fact, of interesting personages crowd the pages of this varied narrative! Remark, I pray you, the grave majesty of Abraham;—the unsullied purity and high political talent of Joseph;—Moses, the lawgiver, poet, and father of his people;—the graceful piety of the infant Samuel gradually maturing into the dignity of the priestly ruler:—the wild and frenzied heroism of Saul;—the various gifts and graces of the unrivalled Monarch Minstrel, and the splendid pageant of his brilliant son and successor! How distinctly all these and a hundred other characters stand out from the canvass, demonstrating by the strongest internal evidence to every experienced eye, that they are not

fancy pieces, but portraits from the life! What charming apparitions of female grace and heroism beam forth from the midst of this throng of warriors, priests, and poets! The beauty of Sarah, that subdued all hearts even at the brilliant court of Egypt;—the touching self-devotion of the daughter of Jephthah;—the poetical enthusiasm of Miriam;—the masculine valour of Deborah and Judith;—finally, the far-famed Egyptian bride, whose praise will live forever, embalmed in the Song of Songs, which is Solomon's!

Let us select, at the risk of being tedious, from this long list of characters, one or two of the more conspicuous, and dwell upon them a little more particularly. Glance, for a moment, gentlemen, at the great lawgiver; the first, humanly viewed, of what Bacon declares to be the first class of great men, the founders of nations. Of humble origin, he was thrown by chance into the midst of the most powerful, learned, and luxurious court of his time. He is the favourite of the sovereign's daughter. Wealth and beauty waste their blandishments upon him. What will he become? Probably an effeminate courtier,—at best a book-learned priest,—a bold, ambitious warrior;—a sagacious politician;—the Talleyrand of the Nile. Ah, no! Beneath that ample forehead the eye of genius burns undimmed by the corrupting influence of a courtly atmosphere, but with no impure or selfish flame. In the palaces of their oppressors, his heart beats with patriotic sympathy for the wrongs of his people. In the ardour of his zeal, he is driven to an act of violence which withdraws him from the circle of the court, and sends him forth for a while to lead the life of his shepherd ancestors in the plains of Midian. But the vision of his injured countrymen pursues him to his retreat, and he forms the magnificent project of redeeming them from bondage, and establishing them as an independent nation in their ancient territory of Palestine. Behold him reappearing, no longer the favourite of the sovereign's daughter, but an exile, stained with blood, unprotected, unprovided with human means, at the splendid court of the Pharaohs, to demand the liberation of his countrymen! What will be his fortune? In all human probability,—by the aid of only human means,—disgraceful failure in his project;—for himself, untimely destruction. Idle terrors! He comes authorized from above. What grand and terrible displays of power attest his mission! At the voice of the obscure exile,

the great river of Egypt runs blood: darkness shrouds her territory: death enters every dwelling, from the cottage of the labourer to the splendid palaces of Thebes and Memphis, until the last act of retributive justice swallows up in the floods of the Red Sea the hosts of the still unsubdued and false-hearted oppressor. Emancipation is effected. The harder task remains of organizing this scattered tribe of liberated slaves into a body politic. Will the steady patriot—the dauntless champion,—the successful leader of the people understand the mysteries of political science? Will he be able to arrange, with all the necessary checks and balances, the complicated machinery of a new constitution? Fear not for him, man of many books! He possesses a source of information more certain than any of your theories, richer than all the pigeon-holes of all the constitution-makers. He is inspired by the fear and love of God, which are the end as well as the beginning of wisdom. He builds his political structure on the Rock of Ages: the gates of hell cannot and will not prevail against it. Then was revealed to the world, for the first time, the beautiful spectacle of a political constitution founded in truth, justice, and equal rights. It was revealed for the perpetual instruction of all succeeding generations. Amid the changing forms of national existence it survives, and will survive forever, the substantial basis of the legislation of Christendom. The lawgiver has accomplished his mission: his work is done. It remains for younger and bolder spirits to remove the last obstacles, and open the way with the sword to the field where this great political experiment must be tried. But does no alloy of ambition mingle with the lofty purposes of the venerable founder? Will he willingly resign to others in his old age the control of the nation which he has been the instrument of creating? Behold him on the top of Mount Pisgah, casting a single glance of hope and joy at the promised abode of his people, and then cheerfully investing with the robe of authority his chosen successor. What remains to crown his already unrivalled name? The laurel of the poet adorns the thoughtful brow of the veteran statesman. The voice that marshalled the people to freedom,—that proclaimed the constitution and the laws,—through life celebrates their achievements in fervid strains of poetry, and breathes its last sigh in a song of praise and blessing on the tribes.

Such, gentlemen, was the great Hebrew lawgiver : in a merely secular view, perhaps the highest name in human history. Less imposing, but still more engaging and attractive, is the far-famed "monarch minstrel." He too, combines the various glories of statesman, warrior, and poet. To him belongs the merit of raising the tribes from the precarious condition of a number of scattered settlements, intermingled with still unsubdued, and, not unfrequently, victorious enemies, into one united, powerful, prosperous state. Under him the vision of the great founder is for the first time fully realized, and the chosen people assume an independent rank among the nations of the earth. In his military character the highest warlike talents,—dauntless courage, pushed to the verge of rashness,—unerring judgment,—prompt decision,—indefatigable activity,—are accompanied by tenderness for the fallen foe,—contempt for self-indulgence,—devotion to the sex,—respect for religion, —in short, all the fairest graces of the most improved states of civilization. Behold him at the cave of Adullam, dashing from his parched lips the untasted water from the well of Bethlehem, that had been too dearly purchased by the jeopardy of precious blood! Behold him in the wilderness of En-gedi, sparing the life of his deadly foe, who at the same moment is pursuing him with the rage of insanity! In all his relations to Saul, what considerate kindness,—what noble forbearance under the most revolting injuries! We seem to see the principle of good encountering that of evil in personal conflict, and overcoming it by the gentle weapons of kindness and charity. In his intercourse with Jonathan, what romantic friendship,—what sincere devotion! We feel, as we read it, that there is no empty show in the charming lament which I just now quoted over the fallen Beauty of Israel. No character in the records of Christian chivalry at its brightest periods,—not the fearless and faultless Bayard,—not the perfect Alfred himself, exemplifies so completely what that famous institution was or should have been. But with all his merit as a warrior and statesman, the gift by which he rises highest in comparison with the great of other ages and nations, is undoubtedly that of *Poetry*. Philosophy and song have rarely taken up their abode in palaces, and when they have done so they have generally put on a loose and gallant dress, accommodated to the scene around them.

When the chivalry of Europe, in the middle ages, cultivated literature, it dwindled very soon into *a gay science*, to use the language of the time, comprehending little but romances and light love songs. Even in the hands of Solomon, the lyre of his lofty father begins already to send forth a softened and somewhat effeminate strain. In the works of David, for the first and only time in the history of the world, the sublime idea of religion, that concentrated essence of all truth,—is imbodied in the highest strains of poetry. Compare these divine odes with the best lyric poetry of any other nation. Compare them, —I will not say with Anacreon, with Sappho, with the lighter portions of Horace, or with Moore, poets professedly of a free and almost licentious cast,—but compare them with all that ancient or modern lyric bards have furnished most excellent in sublimity, pathos, and moral beauty: compare them with Pindar,—with Horace in his highest flights,—with the French Rousseau,—the German Klopstock, Schiller, Burger,—the English Milton, Dryden, and Gray.—Of the whole list, Pindar alone sustains the comparison with some degree of success,—so far as the mere form of composition is concerned,—by the power, splendour, and fulness of his style. "Pindar," says his Latin imitator, "like a river descending from a mountain, and swelled by copious rains above its banks, pours forth the vast, deep, boiling torrent of his song."

Pindarum quisquis studet æmulari,
Jule! ceratis ope dædalea
Nititur pennis, vitreo daturus
Nomina ponto.

Monte decurrens, velut amnis, imbres
Quem super notas aluere ripas,
Fervet immensusque ruit profundo
Pindarus ore.

Splendid, and, as respects the mere form of composition, not unmerited eulogy! But how poor and mean are his subjects, when compared with those of David! Of Pindar, more truly, perhaps, than of any other writer, we may say, that the workmanship excelled the stuff. *Materiem superabat opus.* What a waste of the richest gifts of mind to commemorate the triumphs of the raceground and the wrestling

match,—to adorn the interminable fables of a childish and corrupt mythology! In the matchless odes of David, on the other hand, as I just now remarked, the finest poetry is employed to imbody the most profound wisdom. His only subject is religion,—sublime, beautiful, pure, and true,—as she reveals herself to the highest contemplations of the noblest minds. But is not this devotional language a mere lip-service? a form of sound words employed by the king to set a good example to his court? Ah, no! Religion is his pride, his delight, his passion. There is no mistake about his meaning. His poetry is a boiling flood, like that of Pindar, though heated with a far different fire. Every verse is alive, breathing, burning, throbbing with unaffected sentiment. Whence, then, comes this sudden burst of light and glory from the centre of the deepest intellectual and moral darkness? How happens it that the ruler of a little semi-barbarous eastern state has reached in his odes a height of sublimity, pathos, moral and religious truth, which Pindar never dreamed of, and Milton vainly sought to imitate? Answer, infidelity! Answer, skepticism! When you have done your best in vain, Faith supplies the solution with a word. Ah, splendid bard! could but a ray of your divine inspiration have fallen upon that wayward heart which was destined three thousand years afterwards to celebrate with not unequal powers of verse your unfading glory!

The harp the monarch minstrel swept,
The king of men, the loved of Heaven,
Which music hallow'd as she wept
O'er tones her heart of hearts had given,—
Redoubled be her tears: its chords are riven.

It softened men of iron mould;
It gave them virtues not their own.
No ear so dull,—no heart so cold,
That felt not,—fired not at its tone,
Till David's lyre grew mightier than his throne.

It told the triumphs of our king,
It wafted glory to our God,
It made the gladdened valleys ring,
The cedars bow,—the mountains nod,
Its sound aspired to heaven, and there abode.

When the Greek artist undertook to represent on can-

vass the tragic scene of the sacrifice of Iphigenia, he employed every secret of his talent in heightening the expression of grief upon the faces of the assistants, but when he came to that of Agamemnon he drew a veil over it, for he felt that the depth of a father's despair under such circumstances, was beyond the reach of the pencil. There is one other character, gentlemen, in Scripture, which should now be presented to you as a summary of all that I have said, but I dare not make the attempt. What language can delineate, or pretend to give an idea of perfection? What early maturity! While yet a child, he astonishes the wisest by his learning. What docility to his parents! What affection for his friends! What indulgence to the fallen! What sympathy with female weakness, and infant innocence! What faultless purity of life! With all this gentleness, what unshrinking severity for vice! With all this innocence, what unerring sagacity! In this lowly condition what power of thought, what elevation of sentiment, what grace and charm of language! "Never man spake as he spake." In his doctrine, what before unheard of, unthought of wisdom; the wisdom not of books, but of the heart! "I give unto you a new commandment, that ye love one another." In conduct, what unaffected self-sacrifice! "Father, forgive them! for they know not what they do." Whence then comes this moral phenomenon, still more strange, and on ordinary principles, inexplicable than the one just alluded to? If the history be true, how happens it that the most unpropitious circumstances have brought out this grand result? If false, how is it that a few illiterate persons have invented a character, which to invent would be, in one form, to realize! Answer once more, infidelity! Answer once more, skepticism! Gentlemen, infidelity, skepticism, have answered. The force of truth, long since, tore from the lips of one of their ablest champions the reluctant confession. Hear it in the words of Rousseau:

"*Socrates lived and died like a philosopher: Jesus Christ lived and died like a God!*"

# No. II.

## A VISION OF THE CHURCH.

BY GARDINER SPRING, D. D.

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I was crossing a narrow strip of land which lies upon the frontiers of France and Italy, where the Alps, without losing their loftiness and sublimity, begin to incline toward the Mediterranean, and occasionally put on an appearance of freshness and verdure. I had resolved, if possible, to ascend *Mont Viso*. Though not so high as *Mont Blanc*, yet from its solitary and isolated position, it presents a more imposing appearance of grandeur. It stands almost alone; and like a colossal pyramid, rises high above the various crests, and peaks, and ridges which surround its base. It presented to my mind the aspect of some huge beacon towering amid the storm; and the strange irregularity of the scenery gave strength to the impression. It seemed as though the heaving, angry ocean had been here arrested in the extreme fury of its tempest, and as if the power which had caused, had suddenly stilled its terrors, and bound it in solid and enduring chains. Inconstancy and change seemed strongly represented in constant and changing forms—the very emblem of mutability fixed as it might seem immutable.

Already had I ascended far up the mountain, and all the beautiful plain of Italy was spread out before me. That immense reservoir of waters, that well-known extent of gardens and cities, of wealth and splendour, which the heroes of ancient and modern times pointed out to their soldiers as the reward of perseverance and victory, glittered upon my eye. At the foot of the mountain, on the one side, had once stood the elephants of Hannibal and the armies of Francis the First; on the other, the forces of Cæsar, Charlemagne, and Napoleon. So vivid was my fancy, it almost seemed that I could hear the sullen tramp of their

legions; and the rushing of the streams around me seemed disturbed by the fording of their thronging cavalry, and all the tumult of a hurried march. I looked almost to see the Roman eagle hovering over their steps, or the lilies of France trembling to the mountain air.

The continued and almost unbroken stillness of the scene recalled me from this vision of the past. All this glory and greatness had departed. Sooner will the first drops which issued from these torrents come back from the vast ocean in which they are mingled, and flow again from their source, than aught of all this life and renown return, to trouble or astonish the scene on which they once played so conspicuous and interesting a part. Yet I dwelt long and with singular pleasure on the names of those illustrious heroes. And who does not, as he crosses the Alps?

It was with a feeling of self-reproach that I turned at last to think of others. The glory and splendour of this world had first taken possession of my mind, while true worth and piety had also their monuments near me. I was standing in the retreat of the *ancient Vaudois*.

> "—— Few remember them. They lived unknown,
> Till persecution dragged them into fame,
> And chased them up to heaven."

From the eminence from which I surveyed them, four beautiful valleys spread themselves before me something in the form of a *fan*, converging from the distance, and terminating almost in a point near the spot where I stood. I had heard of this asylum of the faithful as the region of barrenness and ice. I had read of it as a desert environed with frightful precipices, and protected by eternal snows. But such was not the scene on which I gazed. A beautiful sky spread its blue arch above. The verdure was springing from the sides of the mountain, scantily it is true, but for that the more welcome. The valley below seemed spread with a carpet of rich emerald, wrought in with the brightest flowers. Nor were the light and life of civilization wanting to complete the picture. Scattered villages and villas were seen at intervals, and everywhere the vine and the fig tree enriched the plain. The Po, and the Dora too, with their almost innumerable branches, were wildly urging their waters down the rocks and through the crevices of the

mountains, till you might see them quietly stealing to the valleys and mingle with the streams below.

I stood gazing, sometimes at the naked and barren cliffs of some distant promontory; sometimes at mountains that lifted their snowy summits where the eagle is never seen to soar; and sometimes at the enchanting plain beneath. *And are these the rocks*, said I, *which looked down upon those sanguinary persecutions? Are these the mountains whence vibrated those songs of salvation that indicated to the foe the retreat of the faithful? Are these the streams once stained with the blood of the saints? Are these the valleys from which ascended in many a mingled column the flames of the fagot, the supplications and sighs of the martyrs, and the fiend-like exultation of their destroyers?* I felt as though I were surveying the monuments of deeds in which one scarce knows which had the pre-eminence,—the faith and constancy of the victims, or the fury of their fierce persecutors. Here once dwelt a small, poor, forgotten people; a people, weak indeed, but full of that faith which *wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, escaped the edge of the sword.* Here dwelt a people whose glory shone brightest in their tribulations, and to whom it was intrusted to preserve the purity of the faith through centuries of darkness, when barbarous nations ravaged and destroyed all around them, making no distinction between what was sacred and what was profane. And here still dwelt the descendants of that same people, in all the peculiarity of their language, habits, and manners, as well as in all the integrity of that faith which has survived the revolution of empires, and which is still destined to travel down the descent of time, and as successive ages roll on, exert a reforming and purifying influence over the world.

And can this be the place, thought I, where the Woman, described in the Apocalypse, *hath a place prepared of God, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the Serpent?* While this inquiry was passing through my mind, I was lost in contemplation. My thoughts became irregular and wild. My imagination wandered, I knew not whither. Whether it were that sleep overtook me on the mountain, and what followed was the fancy of a dream, or whether a waking vision occupied my senses, I am unable to tell. I seemed raised in spirit above

the world ; and yet my hopes and fears were strangely connected with its spiritual welfare and prosperity. A subject upon which I had thought, and read, and conversed often, weighed upon my bosom, and filled it with deep and serious reflection. My anxious mind brooded over it, as some busy, restless fancy, waking to the roar of the tempest, pictures to itself evils which nothing can remedy or relieve.

I trembled for the Ark of God. Errors, deeply ruinous in doctrine and practice, were inducing desolation and decay. A smooth theology had taken the place of those wholesome truths which have in every age been the wisdom of God, and the power of God to salvation. The *meekness of wisdom* was superseded by a vaunting and arrogant spirit; and means and measures were making progress in the church, which threatened to burn over her fairest borders, and leave them like a land that could not be tilled, or sown, or eared, or harvested for generations to come. I saw collisions of sentiment distracting the minds and dividing the counsels of those who were once *joined together in the same mind and the same judgment.* I saw also chilling alienations among those who once loved as brethren ; while the peaceful spirit who had so long hovered over this fair land, was just about to spread his pinions and fly away. Already, *the ways of Zion mourned because few came to her solemn feasts.* Already the streams of mercy seemed to be drying up, which have for so long a period been refreshing our heritage and bearing on their bosom the blessings of salvation to distant lands. *From the daughter of Zion all her beauty was departed. Her princes were become like harts that find no pasture ; and they were gone without strength before the pursuer.* I thought of her in the days of her captivity and reproach, when she hung her harp upon the willows, and wept. I remembered, and could not forbear uttering aloud, that affecting lamentation of the Prophet, *How hath the Lord covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud in his anger, and cast down from heaven unto earth the beauty of Israel, and remembered not his footstool in the day of his anger.*

Such were the thoughts which occupied me in my revery. And they were not without close connexion and sympathy with those which had often disturbed me in my hours of waking reflection. The day seemed dark and gloomy like

one in November. The sun was enveloped in clouds, and the rough north wind roared round me. I was by the side of a lofty, weather-beaten mountain. Its top seemed to support the heavens, and its brow frowned over a deep, expansive wilderness, impervious to the eye, and immeasurable in extent. It appeared at first view as one vast desert, where was no trace of human footsteps, and where no man dwelt.

As I was walking to and fro with a mind almost as cheerless as the rugged cliffs around me, suddenly a chorus of superhuman voices filled the air. The words of their song fell distinctly upon my ear, clear and sweet as from instruments of silver. They chanted, *Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?* As I turned to look toward the desert, I beheld a female form of distinguished attractions and beauty, leaning on *One like unto the Son of man.* Her countenance was expressive of intelligence and sweetness. Her mien was humble, yet a peculiar dignity shone in her every action, and her entire appearance seemed pre-eminently fitted to please and captivate. I had heard of One dwelling in the wilderness, whom the tongues of inspired men and angels had represented as clothed with celestial comeliness and decked with beauty from the skies—a wanderer in the desert, but not alone; hand in hand with One more powerful than herself, she had her course through its strife and temptations. As my eye rested upon her for the purpose of scanning her person more carefully, that I might satisfy myself if this were indeed she of whom I had heard, I saw that she was enveloped in a dense and hazy atmosphere, through which a pale light beamed from her countenance and clothed her form, and seemed everywhere struggling to dart forth its rays. For the moment it seemed doubtful whether she would not be merged in the obscurity; but the mist was soon dissipated, and she looked forth like *the moon walking in her brightness*, luminous in her entire form, and, like *the angel standing in the sun*, conspicuous to the world.

I observed that her features were in part covered with a veil. She had an humble, lowly spirit, and though in the full power of youth and beauty, seemed utterly unconscious of her attractions. She had no desire of superiority or distinction; no undue assumption of dignity; no spirit of am-

bition or rivalry. She did not court applause, nor was she offended at rebuke. She sought not the eye of the world, neither delighted in its bustle and confusion; but rather in the shade and stillness of some beloved retreat, open only to the observation, and consecrated only by the presence of her Lord and Husband. At times she instinctively shrunk from his inspection, and hid her face in confusion. Nor was there in this any affectation of modesty, but a deep and ingenuous impression of her unworthiness that oppressed her, and often indeed found its way to her lips. *Look not upon me*, she would exclaim, *Look not upon me, because the Sun hath looked upon me!* One of her loveliest characteristics, as it seemed to me, was this humble, meek, and retiring spirit. Her progress was often rapid, yet was it noiseless and silent as the dew of heaven. Wherever she took a false step, she herself was the first to detect it, and prompt and faithful in her self-reproach. Rather than feel that she was worthy to be the object of admiration, many a time would she lay her hand upon her mouth and exclaim, *Behold, I am vile!* There was a lowliness of demeanour exemplified in her progress that reminded me of the spirit of genuine piety. She seemed at such a remove from the haughty, overbearing temper of the world, that I concluded she belonged to another race of beings. For nothing did I envy her so much as for this unearthly spirit.

And can this be she, thought I, of whom I have so often read, that was *cast out into the open field to the loathing of her person, in the day that she was born?* If so, nothing could be more striking than the contrast between her original condition, her debased parentage, and her present elevation and prospects. She was like one who had sustained a moral transformation, and had been, as it were, recreated and born anew. Once *poor and miserable, and blind and naked*, she was now *clothed with embroidered work, girded about with fine linen, covered with silk, and decked with ornaments.* Though *her birth and nativity were of the land of Canaan;* though *her father was a Hittite and her mother an Amorite;* yet she was now allied to a family that participates the riches and royalty of a nobler world, and *her renown went forth among the nations for her beauty.* She was the child of God—the adopted daughter of the King of heaven. Her second birth traced her lineage to the skies;—*born, not of blood, nor*

*of the will of flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.* She had no unborrowed splendour, yet was she *covered with righteousness as with a garment, and prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.* Though once soiled and blemished by her native servitude; though abject in her occupation and associates; yet was she now *as the wings of a dove covered with silver and her feathers with yellow gold.* My own impressions of her loveliness were confirmed by what I distinctly heard from the lips of her royal husband. *Behold*, said he, *thou art fair, my love, behold, thou art fair. My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother; she is the choice one of her that bare her.* Sometimes he spoke of the tenderness of her attachment; sometimes of her purity and faithfulness; and sometimes, breaking forth in the language of gratified joy, he exclaimed, *Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee!*

Filled with admiration, I could not but again exclaim, *Who is this?*—so depraved in her nativity, and yet so exalted in her adoption—so impure in her original, and yet so pure in her transformation—so heaven-born, so acknowledged and endeared to higher worlds, and yet in her own view so worthless? The answer was quickly upon my lips. Who but the *church of the First-born!*—the spiritual Jerusalem from God out of heaven—*the Bride, the Lamb's wife!* Who but that complex, ornate, and lovely Personage, who is a lively emblem, a typical designation of the virtuous of every age and name, here imbodied and personified by the daughter of Zion *travelling in the greatness of her strength.*

This amiable and fair being I beheld far from the abodes of men, in the waste, howling desert. *She had no continuing city.* She was away from home, often *afflicted, tossed with tempests, and not comforted.* The place where she sojourned was a place of vicissitude and wo. There were *no sorrows like her sorrows*, and a stranger did not intermeddle with her joy. Here she *stretched forth her hands unto God, and her soul thirsted for him as a thirsty land* for the grateful and ever welcome rain. Here she met with delays, hinderances, and vexations. The powers of darkness were leagued against her, combining their strength and subtlety to perplex and imbitter her mind, to retard her progress, and effect her destruction. She was

passing through an enemy's land, and had *put on the whole armour of God. Without were fightings, and within were fears.* External foes, and indwelling sins, distracting cares, painful bereavements, and a subtle adversary often filled her with despondency, and spoiled her every earth-born hope.

I observed that she did not always know how to explore her path, and that she sometimes forsook her guide and wandered from the way. Then she was depressed and discouraged, and instead of going cheerfully forward, would stray up and down in the wilderness. And then her courage faltered, her strength languished, and her beauty withered. Many a time, at such seasons, would she sit down and weep with abundant sorrow, and exclaim as though all hope had deserted her, *My heart is overwhelmed within me! All thy waves and billows have gone over my soul!* The wilderness too was long, and she was often wearied by the length of the way. Sometimes she trembled, and seemed on the point of fainting or falling; and then again she would press forward, now with a bold, now with a doubtful step.

Here she wandered amid the gloom and darkness of the desert. Here she had *a place prepared for her by God.* With his own hands he spread a table for her. The rock supplied her, and the manna descended. She fed on angels' food, and ate the bread of life. The pillar and the cloud moved before her. The God of Israel himself was with her—a friend in need, a refuge in times of trouble. In his mercy and care, in his power and faithfulness, she had resources which never failed. She sometimes grieved him, but he never abandoned her. He seemed to have no employment so delightful to his heart as to care for her. He would watch her every step. He would often throw around her the arms of his protection to save her even from imaginary harm. He would spread his banner of love over her, and support her from step to step in all her course. I heard him say to her, *I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, I have loved thee; therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life.* It seemed to me that he would blot out all the nations, that he would crush a thousand worlds, before one hair of her head should fall to the ground.

And yet there were sensible alternations in her spirit and condition. Sometimes she *looked for light, and beheld darkness*, and *for good, and beheld trouble and vexation;* and then again her most chilling fears were turned into hopes, and her deepest sorrows into joy. Sometimes her prospect was gilded by all the varied tints of spring, and all the rich maturity of autumn; while sometimes the snows of winter swept along her path, and night enshrouded it with gloom. At times the skies above her were soft and serene; at times they were black and heavy,—lowering with tempest, and dark with indignation. Her path now lay through beds of spices, and along the fruits of the valley, which the forest enriched with its softest foliage; where the murmur of the running streams, and the light breezes cheered and refreshed her, and every odour, charged with fragrance, brought pleasure to her senses; and again she was constrained, amid the wildness of the precipices and the roar of the tempest, to pass along the *lion's dens and the mountains of the leopards.*

As I was attentively observing her, a beam of light fell on her path, at a moment when the darkness had increased around her, and when despondency seemed almost to overwhelm her soul. All at once her countenance became bright, and, though still pensive, she pursued her course with revived strength and freshness. Something had roused her from her depression and put new courage into her heart. It was *the voice of her Beloved.* A multitude of conflicting emotions seemed for a moment to agitate her bosom. They were emotions of surprise, of joy, and of grief. *Rise up, my love, my fair one,* said he, *and come away! For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the song of the turtle is heard in our land. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away!* At this well-known voice, a tear stood in her eye. She *looked on him whom she had pierced, and mourned.* I heard her confessions of folly, and promises of faithfulness, and felt that I could make them my own. My soul melted within me, and flowed forth in her every tear. Never shall I forget when she hid herself from his sight, as though fearful of his reproaches, and bewailed her departures from *him whom her soul loved.* Then it was that I heard him say, *O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, let me*

*see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely!* Then it was that he *allured her and spake comfortably unto her, and gave her the valley of Achor for a door of hope, and she sang there as in the days of her youth.* There did he wipe away the tears from her cheeks, and cheer her with the promise of his favour; while she, animated and buoyant with warm affection and eager hopes, was once more *like a roe, or young hart upon the mountains of Bether.* For the moment, she forgot that she was in the wilderness. She remembered not that she was far from her destined home, so much did the presence of him she thus loved smooth her path along the desert, and render her sojourn amid its wilds a season of happiness and security.

This endured not long. Dark clouds again enfolded her, the scene put off its charms, and the way before her was curtained with its wonted gloom. There was nothing here to allure her stay, nothing suited to her large desires, nothing that could become the source of her blessedness, or the place of her repose. Nor was she either alarmed or surprised by the oft-repeated admonition, *Arise, and depart hence, for this is not your rest, because it is polluted;* for as often did she herself respond, *O that I had wings like a dove, for then would I fly away and be at rest!* To her hallowed mind, the place of her pilgrimage presented nothing but a wilderness, which she longed to leave behind her. Communion with her Lord had rendered it at times a place of delightful remembrance; but she well knew that a higher abode was awaiting her, where she should enjoy his presence uninterruptedly and forever. There was her treasure, and there her heart. Her conversation was there. Her ardent desires, her highest good was there. Heaven absorbed her attention, awakened her highest affections and passions, and exhausted the vigour of her mind. Her very sorrows and griefs indicated its aspirations and tendencies. Like the magnetic needle, amid all the variations of a transient conflict, or passing storm, her heart exhibited a trembling agitation till it reposed in one unchanging point of rest. There were moments when her faith, with more than ordinary vividness, realized the unseen world, when a hope full of immortality shed its fragrance over her spirits, and made her long for the promised land. And then, habitually watchful of the pillar and the cloud, regardless

of obstacles and fearless of danger, onward she went from conquering to conquer. The circuities and vicissitudes of her path might at times bewilder her; the grandeur of the scenery, or its softness and beauty might for a moment allure her; but her aim was fixed,—the object single to which she aspired. *Forgetting the things that were behind, and reaching forth to those which were before, she pressed toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ.* It was the way to the Heavenly City, and she could not turn back. It was the only way, and she could not forego the expectation of that imperishable inheritance.

I stood a while wondering at her zeal and stedfastness, but my wonder ceased when I recollected that she was not alone. She leaned on One who seemed more than mortal.

> "In his side he bore,
> And in his hands and feet the cruel scars."

He it was who *bore her griefs, carried her sorrows*, and even made her sins his own. It was her Lord—her Husband—her Life—her Sacrifice. It was *he who liveth and was dead, and is alive for evermore*, to succour and bless his church when all the nations die. I saw the secret of her strength. *Her life was hid with Christ in God.* Though she was perfect weakness, she had Omnipotence to lean upon. Experience had taught her her own insufficiency, and *she lived by faith in him who loved her, and gave himself for her.* I was not a little interested in this view of her progress. Literally did she come *up from the wilderness, leaning upon her Beloved.* She did not move a step without him. She did not wait for him to lead her, but went forward *leaning upon him.* When she stood still, she always stood alone. Once I saw her so depressed and weary that she sunk to the earth; and then he took her up in his arms and carried her like a lamb in his bosom. Thus she pursued her way—for the most part wakeful, active, persevering,—and yet ever *leaning upon him.* The influence under which she acted, seemed a sort of charm upon her will, and *drew her with the cords of love as with the bands of a man.* It was her joy, as well as her strength. It gave buoyancy to her hopes, and inspired her with the confidence that he would keep her from falling and bear her

safely through. When, by some strong temptation, she lost sight of her dependence, most bitterly was she made to repent of her self-confidence and folly. Then it was that her time was spent in retracing and recovering the ground she had lost, and bemoaning her sad condition. Many a time has she then exclaimed, *O that it were with me as in months past, when the candle of the Lord shone upon my head!* But these seasons of self-reproach and pensiveness were comparatively few. Habitually she looked beyond all created things, felt herself to be his creature and child, subject to his guidance and control, dependent on his strength and grace. Never did she delight in her dependence more than during the seasons of her greatest vigour, her most rapid progress. Never could she say with a more comforted confidence, than in her most successful victories, *My soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him.*

I thought I saw the heavenly axiom verified, *I love them that love me.* By nothing was her guide and patron more distinguished than his love for her, and by nothing was she more distinguished than her love to him. In strains sweet as angels use, I often heard her sing, *My beloved is the chief among ten thousands! Yea, he is altogether lovely!* On him she placed her fondest affection, and reposed her every hope. Her love was confiding and unsuspicious; her confidence filial and even childlike. Sometimes you might see her reclining under the shadow of his favour with great delight; sometimes lamenting his absence and watching for his return; sometimes traversing with him the loftiest mountains, and sometimes exploring the vineyards *to see if the vine flourish and the tender grape appear.* If difficulties opposed, or dangers threatened, or enemies stood ready to devour; *his grace was sufficient for her, his strength was made perfect in her weakness*, his presence was her chief joy. Leaning on him, she escaped the dangers of the wilderness, ascended the steepest mountains, stood safe on the brink of the angry precipice, penetrated hideous forests, resisted and overcame the fiercest beasts of prey. With her eye on him, and all her trust in him, she continued her course. And while *the youth became faint and were weary, and the young men had utterly fallen*, she *renewed her strength;* in heavenly contemplation, she mounted up with wings as an eagle, and through all her course of duty and

of trial, she *ran and was not weary, and walked and did not faint.* While others were intimidated by dangers, or discouraged by difficulty, or lost sight of their Leader; she pressed forward, because her courage was inspirited from above, and her exertion had a spring, a source, an energy not her own. The dangers and trials of the wilderness were gradually left behind her, and remembered only to enhance her gratitude and perpetuate her praise.

I observed, that in leaning upon her Beloved, she was often *led in a way that she knew not, and in paths that she had not known.* She seemed to be under a sort of discipline, designed to subdue her will to an unconditional acquiescence in his; to chastise her self-confidence, and teach her to walk *by faith and not by sight.* Like the Father of the faithful, she *went forth not knowing whither she went.* She knew not whither she was going the next hour, the next moment, the next step. It was her province to follow, not to lead: to obey, not to dictate. Her hopes and fears were both subject to disappointment. She was journeying in a weary land, and beheld the way stretching out almost immeasurably before her and lengthening as she proceeded. Often was she conducted by a very diversified course—sometimes amid scenes of mercy, and sometimes amid scenes of judgment—now amid well watered meadows, and now over dry and barren lands—now to mountains whence she caught a glimpse of her promised inheritance, and now to some low valley where the light of heaven scarcely penetrated. Her path was checkered and variable, like the path of human life. It was perpetually changing—rousing her attention when she was careless—reminding her of her obligations when she was ungrateful—recalling her confidence when she had placed it upon creatures. Her disposition was thus tried, and her character formed. Many a time what she thought her best seasons, proved her worst; and what she thought her worst, proved her best; till, by an alternately painful and joyful experience, she learned to repose all her confidence in her Redeemer, and to have no will but his. I had not seen such a spirit among men. The storms of life had driven her to this wilderness; there to live eminently above the world and walk with God. There was a tenderness, a meekness, and submission, a love, a gratitude, a cheerfulness which evinced that she was not long to be an inhabitant of earth.

I could not help exclaiming, *What a glorious object is this which I behold!* The church of the first-born struggling through this world,—this moral wilderness,—is *a spectacle to God, to angels, and men.* This humble and lovely personage, thought I, may well be the object of concern, of solicitude, of admiration. While this reflection was passing in my mind; a multitude of voices, issuing I knew not whence, repeated the song, *Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her Beloved?* I turned to ascertain who they were that spoke, and it seemed to me that the atmosphere around and above her was filled with living beings. They were of various descriptions and orders, very dissimilar in their appearance, but all deeply interested in the progress and condition of this daughter of Zion. There was a peculiarity about her person, her professions, her claims, her prospects, that attracted the attention of the inhabitants of this lower world. She disclaimed the authority of its maxims and usages. She declined its pleasures, and all participation in its unhallowed amusements. And she would not, needlessly, even intermingle with its society. She *came out and was separate*, that all might know what immunities she challenged, and of what inheritance she was the expectant.

She was like *a city set on an hill.* None could help seeing her; none could view her with indifference. Good men beheld her, as identified with the glory of the Redeemer, as identifying their own happiness and glory with hers, as imbodying the best interests of mankind in this world and that which is to come. Though now depressed, they saw that soon she was to be triumphant, soon to behold *her sons coming from far, and her daughters from the end of the world;* and though still bearing the marks of imperfection and servitude, ere long to share the kingdoms of this world with her Prince, and wear a diadem of gold.

Bad men beheld her, sometimes to wonder at the peculiarity of her condition—a feeble woman coming up from the wilderness, leaning upon her Beloved! Sometimes to admire her beauty, for she was *comely as Jerusalem*, and the *fairest among women*; sometimes to acknowledge her influence and power, for she was *terrible as an army with banners;* sometimes to feel the reproach of her example; for though shining in borrowed splendour, yet was she the light of the world; sometimes to be envious at her allot-

ment, for the smile of heaven played upon her countenance, and *the solitary place was glad for her:* and sometimes to hate her with perfect hatred, to vex and injure her, to persecute, and if possible destroy her.

I saw also a multitude of living spirits hovering over her path and near her person. They were messengers from a higher world—an exalted order of beings, and seemed to have come from the presence of God. Their countenances were like lightning, and their raiment white as snow. They possessed wonderful power and activity, and moved with the swiftness of the wind. They were beautiful also beyond a parallel—clothed with unfading and immortal youth, and glowing with the energy and ardour of truth and love. I saw them lifting up their hands—spreading forth their wings—and apparently in sweet discourse with one another as they watched her progress. Now, they would stoop down and bend their faces towards the ground to observe her. Again, they would fly through the air and return, as though from some unknown region whither they had gone to tell of her conquests. At times, they would range themselves in throngs and companies, and strike their lyres and tune their hymns of praise. One particularly, I observed, of elevated mien and resplendent countenance, who hovered around her head, so near indeed that the vivid light that enveloped her coloured and tinged his form, covering both as with a mantle of celestial splendour. With his finger he pointed towards Heaven and said, *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath entered into the heart of man the things that God hath prepared for them that love him!*

I saw two dark and benighted spirits, irritated with malignity, corroded with envy, and scarred by God's indignation, come up as it were out of the earth, and alight about her. I trembled for her safety, for it seemed to me they *came with great wrath, as though they knew they had but a short time.* I was reassured however by the calm and confident mien with which she looked around, as though certain of protection from One mightier than they. And then I heard the clashing of arms, and saw the rushing of battle. In the tumultuous conflict which ensued, I could distinguish voices of fiend-like rage and despair, the answer of exulting, indignant courage mingled together, and at times the startling cry of some wounded, fallen combatant, resounding faint and fainter, as though borne and

hurried down to earth's very centre. With what deep interest did I await the result! Yet I did not fear for it. Soon the noise of strife gave place to shouts of victory. And from the sweet notes of praise—praise *to Him who is seated upon the throne*,—I knew they were from the victorious company who are *ministering spirits to them that shall be heirs of salvation*, and to whom the church was the object of unremitting care.

I saw also, that God her mighty Maker regarded her. More than all things else, did she illustrate his ineffable glory. He beheld her clothed with his own loveliness. *He rejoiced over her with joy; he joyed over her with singing. As a bridegroom rejoiceth over his bride, so did her God rejoice over her.* God her Redeemer was with her—her *shelter and shade, her glory and the lifter up of her head.* God her Sanctifier too had his dwelling within her heart, and made her his temple; while the ever blessed and glorious Trinity, through her, made impressive and augmenting discoveries of his own excellence.

Next to her glorious Lord, no object so well deserved, or might so well attract attention, as this pilgrim in the desert. I looked upon her with more than admiration. And while I gazed on her, as in her beauty and her might she pursued her course, I could not help repeating the vow I had made in my youth—*If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning!—let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy!*

Inexpressibly happy, thought I, is the church of God! Where is there in the world so amiable and lovely a character—where a community so favoured as this! Many a time, when she has had no resting place, and has been hunted like a partridge upon the mountains, has the Shepherd and Stone of Israel provided safety and repose for her, and kept her as the apple of his eye. Often when she has been driven from among men, and perdition like a flood has chased her, has he himself been her dwelling-place, and nourished and brought her up as an only child. Her ignorance he has instructed; her languor and depression he has changed into hope and rejoicing; her solitude he has sweetened by his presence; her danger he has driven far away. He has been *her refuge and her strength.* To the multiplied mischiefs that have passed through the earth,

he has said, *Touch not mine anointed, and do my people no harm!* He has beautified and enlarged her. He has caused her to look forth like the morning. He has *made her head like Carmel, and the hair of her head like Lebanon.* He has *set her as a seal upon his heart, as a seal upon his arm.* Nor will his purposes of love toward her be accomplished, till he has purified her from all her imperfection, decked her with majesty and excellency, and in the day of her celestial espousals, *presented her to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.*

While this train of thought was passing through my mind, I cast my eyes once more towards the wilderness. No longer was it a desert, but rather an expanse of cultivated fields, and gardens of richest shrubbery, everywhere interspersed with beautiful villages, towering palaces, lofty turrets, and living men. The corn and the vine, the olive and the palm flourished. *Instead of the thorn, was the fir-tree,* and instead of the brier, the myrtle and the rose. *Waters broke out in the desert.* The way through this verdant territory seemed a highway. No tedious, intricate pilgrimage was it now. Enemies had disappeared. *No lion was there, neither any ravenous beast went up thereon, it was not found there.* And the pilgrim had now thrown aside that veil which obscured her, and put on her most splendid attire. A voice reached her from the heavens, *Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.* She looked forth now as the effulgence of the world. She seemed as it were, *clothed with the sun; the moon was under her feet, and upon her head was a crown of twelve stars.* There was a halo of glory encircling her, that reminded me of the *Shekinah* that stood over the ancient tabernacle. She was near to the Deity, encompassed with glory, and living within the comprehension of his smile. Kings and princes were allured by her brightness, and the wondering people came bending to her. *The kings of Tarshish and the isles brought her presents; the kings of Sheba and Seba offered her gifts.* No longer did she falter in her course, or turn her eye backward. She was clothed with a divine panoply, and went forth *more than conquerer through him that loved her.* A banner waved over her of the purest gold, on one side of which was set in rich enamel, THE LORD KNOWETH THEM

THAT ARE HIS; and on the other, LET EVERY ONE THAT NAMETH THE NAME OF CHRIST DEPART FROM INIQUITY. At her approach every false system of religion was arrested in its progress; all mist and darkness, error and delusion, sin, shame, and wo fled before her. Streams of light and salvation flowed everywhere around her, and sent forth their blessings to every land. In her hand she carried a scroll, or parchment, which she unfolded before the nations, and by which she *turned them from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God.* Wonderful was the transformation that attended and followed her brilliant career. Iniquity fell before her. Tyranny and oppression and unrighteousness were blasted by her breath. Misery and despair were together chased away by the light of her countenance. *Every valley was exalted, and every mountain and hill was made low; the crooked was made straight, and the rough places plain; and the glory of the Lord was revealed, and all flesh saw it together.*

"O scenes surpassing fable and yet true;
Scenes of accomplish'd bliss, which who can see
Though but in distant prospect, and not feel
His soul refresh'd with foretastes of the joy!"

*The mountains and the hills broke forth before into singing, and all the trees of the field clapped their hands.* The Spirit was poured from on high, and the world appeared to be turning to the service and favour of the true God. Every revolution of this diurnal sphere beheld her triumphs *from the rising of the sun to his going down.*

"Distant, barbarous climes,
Rivers unknown to song, where first the sun
Gilds Indian mountains, or his setting beam
Flames on the Atlantic isles,

alternately became the scenes of her perpetuated victories. Distant continents and islands, wandering tribes and collected empires, though once shrouded in deepest gloom, now beheld and reflected the brightness of her rising.

"One song employs all nations, and all cry,
*Worthy the Lamb, for he was slain for us!*
The dwellers in the vales and on the rocks
Shout to each other, and the mountain tops
From distant mountains catch the flying joy.
Till nation after nation taught the strain,
Earth rolls the rapturous hosannah round."

My revery continued, but the gloom and depression which at first pervaded it passed away. Instead of a dark day in November, it appeared to my gratified imagination like the loveliest in May. Brown autumn had fled. Winter had been chased away by the softness and beauty of spring. The sun was just descending in his gayest chariot, and throwing his light from pole to pole. The rough north wind had yielded to the fragrant zephyr. The rugged mountain had become like the verdant lawn. The unclouded sky, the balmy air, the rich foliage of the forest, the fragrant flowers were but faintly emblematical of the unbroken serenity I felt within. The birds were chanting their songs of joy, and all nature was vocal with praise and blossoming with hope. The bow of promise threw its arch over the eastern sky, and as the sun went down, he cast forth the signals of a still brighter day.

# No. III.

## THE PERILS OF INFIDELITY.

FOUNDED ON FACT.

### PART FIRST.

### SHALL I MARRY AN INFIDEL?

It was Sunday evening,—that pleasant hour to the virtuous poor,—when Alice Grey was sitting by a bright fire, in a small, comfortable-looking room. There was no one with her except her infant, which was sleeping quietly in its cradle by her side. Her calm, innocent, and intelligent face, and the decent and respectable appearance of every thing about her, gave to the little apartment a grace and attraction which larger rooms, and more elegant furniture, and greater beauty, often fail of possessing.

She would frequently look at the cradle with that indescribable expression with which a happy mother gazes on her sleeping child, and then cast her eyes towards the door as if expecting some one to enter; one who, you would readily apprehend, was the father of her baby, and the partner of her duties and pleasures.

While she was thus sitting by the table, with her arms resting upon the great Bible which she had been reading, her face suddenly lighted up with a still brighter glow of pleasure as the door opened, and her husband entered.

"Well, wife," he said, as he hung up his hat and great-coat, "are you not going to give me a scolding for staying away so long, when I said I should be gone only half an hour?"

"No," answered Alice, "I am not in a scolding mood; and who could be, James, with this good book on one side, and a sleeping baby on the other? both speak to me of the kingdom of heaven, where there are no harsh words. But I have missed you very much; you know on Sunday even-

ings we read together, and hear Fanny and Jemmy say their hymns and the lessons they have learned at Sunday-school. The children did not enjoy themselves so much as usual, and I could not help wishing you were with us."

"Well, Alice," said her husband, "don't say any more about it; I was sorry not to be here at the time they said their lessons, but I could not get away from Ralph Vincent without affronting him, he had so much to say; and he took me a long walk instead of the little round he at first intended."

"Have you been all this time with Ralph?" quickly asked Alice.

"Why not?" replied James; "what is the matter with Ralph, that I should not be with him? he knows a great deal and has a great deal to say."

"He has a great deal to say," answered Alice, "and thinks he knows a great deal."

"And perhaps," retorted James, "you think, Alice, you know more than he does."

Although this was said in a laughing tone, there was in it something painful to his wife; it was different from his usual mode of speaking, and it proved also to her that he did not agree with her in her opinion of Ralph Vincent's vain and superficial character. After a moment's pause she looked in her husband's face, and, with a tone of great seriousness but of true tenderness, said, "Dear James, I do not like Ralph; I think he has too high an opinion of himself."

"How does he show that?" said James.

"Why, he is always boasting of what he can prove, and talking about the light of reason, as he calls it, and jesting about religion; whatever he does not like he calls priest-craft; that's his word, I believe. He seems to me to try to frighten people; he says things that he thinks very smart, because they are indelicate or irreverent; and then he looks round to see who is astonished, and stretches himself up to his full height, (and you know he is very tall,) and he seems as if he thought he was a great man."

"He does know more than you or I."

"I do not," rejoined Alice, "pretend to know so much as he does, or as your wife, James, ought to know. I have read scarcely any thing except this best of all books," putting her hand on the Bible. Her humility, her affectionate

tone of voice, the simple truth of her remarks on Ralph, and may-be the compliment to himself, for all men are susceptible of such things, quite subdued her husband's slight dissatisfaction with her,—or rather with himself, for this was the real cause of his momentary captiousness towards his wife.

Ralph belonged to that set of men who call themselves freethinkers, or free inquirers, which means, with many of them, free to inquire, and free to think, and free to rail, against the Christian religion; free to abuse and contemn what they see is held sacred, and dearer than life, by thousands of their fellow-beings; free to hold up to scorn and ridicule the support of the poor, the sick, the forsaken; free to misrepresent and deride the conclusions of the philosophers and sages,—the patient, and faithful, and fearless seekers after truth, (the *true* "freethinkers" of the world,) who have believed in the simple story of Jesus of Nazareth; free to trample upon the altars of human hope, of human trust, of human joy. This freedom they claim; but they are not free, we boldly assert, to see and to recognise the internal and the external evidences of the truth they despise; not free to estimate the worth of a faith, that not merely enables weak human nature to die with courage and calmness,—this may be done by the infidel suicide,—but enables the poor, the despised, the injured man to bear his trial with a quiet fortitude, and a holy joy, with no one but the Being in whom he believes to witness his virtue. They are not free to estimate the truth of a faith that enables the mother to consign her infant to the grave, with the consoling trust that the child liveth, though her arms cannot press it to her aching heart. They are not free to weigh the value of "the evidence of things not seen, the substance of things hoped for,"—of "that pleasing hope, that strong desire, that longing after immortality," which exists, or has existed, in the heart of every human being. They are not free to estimate the weight and importance of the fact, that almost every man believes in something invisible; that even every superstition is an argument in favour of the existence of God. They are not free fairly to examine, and calmly and faithfully to investigate, all the spiritual as well as the historical evidences of Christianity. Here the self-styled "freethinker" is not free; he is the very bigot he despises; he himself is among the ranks of the superstitious, for he

fears religious inquiry. He is free to see defects, but not to perceive beauties; free to attack, but not to defend; free only to find objections and to discover faults; free to see the spots in the sun, but his eyes are blinded to the splendour of the glorious luminary itself.

Ralph was one of these freethinkers; and never was the most exclusive zealot more anxious to make proselytes to a faith that he considered essential to eternal happiness, than he was to make converts to his gloomy belief, that man lies down in the dust with the beasts that perish, with no brighter hope, and no further anxiety. No wonder that Alice Grey dreaded such a companion for her husband. She had for some time suspected that Ralph was anxious to undermine James's religious belief; she knew that he had succeeded in raising some doubts in his mind, and, with all the watchfulness natural to true affection, she had narrowly observed the growth of their intimacy. It was a startling and exquisitely painful thing to her, to find that James had passed the Sunday evening, sacred as it had hitherto been to herself and her children, with Ralph Vincent.

There is an instinctive courage and wisdom, that seem suddenly to inspire the most timid and uninstructed, in times of great danger to those they love, with the power to perceive and adopt the most effectual means for their rescue. Alice forbore to censure his conduct; she said no more to her husband upon the subject of his absence from them all the evening; but she gave him an account of the children's Sunday lessons. It happened to be the love of Jesus for little children. "I wish, James, you could have heard Fanny when she said to me, 'Mother, if I had died in that fever I had last spring, should I not have gone to Jesus Christ, and would not he have taken me in his arms, as he did little children when he was on earth?' and I said to her, 'Yes;' for I never felt so sure, as I did at that moment, of the truth of our religion. That is a dear, good child, and I sometimes feel as if she was not made for this world."

Alice had touched the right key; James loved this child with that love which is itself a proof of immortality. "Alice," said he, "I dare say that Ralph would call me superstitious; but I never look at Fanny without a feeling as if she had come from another and better world, and as if she still belonged to it."

When the morrow came, James was still more firmly resolved to join the Temperance Society. He felt dissatisfied with himself at the recollection of the way in which he had passed the Sunday evening, and was convinced of the wisdom of the precautionary measure which his wife had proposed. He accordingly went and signed his name. This action, and the smile of his good Alice when he returned and told her what he had done, quite restored his tranquillity. "You may be sure that I shall pass this evening with you and the children," he said to his wife, as he went out to his morning's work in the printing office.

Soon after, Alice's cousin Jane entered. "I have come, Alice," she said, as she seated herself, "to chat with you this morning while you are at your work; the pain in my side prevents my sewing to-day and I am low-spirited, and want you to cheer me up. Don't leave what you are doing; we can talk just as well."

"I am sorry," said Alice, "that you are sick again. What has the physician directed you to do for yourself?"

"Not to sew too long at a time, and to exercise in the open air, and one thing harder than any thing else, and that I find it impossible to perform."

"What is that?"

"To keep myself in good spirits. If it were not wicked to envy any one, and if I did not love you too well, I should envy you, Alice; you need no such direction from the doctor. Happiness is a medicine not so easily obtained as he thinks, perhaps."

Alice knew too well the cause of Jane's sorrow to make it necessary to ask, and she feared it was beyond the reach of human help. "Though we cannot find happiness, Jane, we may, if we seek for it, find patience; and patience leads the way to cheerfulness, and cheerfulness to hope, and so happiness comes at last."

"Yes," said Jane, "but not in this world."

Alice would have spoken of the still greater happiness in a life to come, promised to those whose inheritance here has been tears and disappointment; but she knew this was never forgotten by Jane. The present sorrow was pressing heavily upon her weak frame, and she tried to think of some alleviation for her immediate suffering. To speak what was in her heart to a true friend, she knew was one means of comfort. "Tell me," she said, "have you no

hope that Ralph will be converted, that he will yet be a Christian?"

"I have none," said Jane, "unless you and James can convert him, or unless my constant prayer should be answered, and God should touch his heart, and turn it towards Him. For myself, my soul is bewildered; you know that Ralph and I have loved each other ever since we were children, and I find it hard to turn away from him now; and yet, Alice, I know it would be to peril my own soul to marry an unbeliever; and I feel that He who has commanded us, if the right eye offend us to pluck it out, bids me to separate myself from him, let him be ever so dear."

Jane covered her face to hide the tears that she could not suppress. "Do not despair," said Alice; "your faith may yet be the means of saving him. You must reason with him; you must try to convert him; as he loves you, he perhaps will listen to you, and treat your arguments with respect, instead of the ridicule with which he does mine."

Alice was right in her conjectures with regard to Ralph, and had formed a just estimate of his character; but from the straight-forward simplicity of her own character, and the instinctive purity of her taste, she was perfectly insensible to the real attraction of his society to those who could be flattered or amused by him. She was right, too, in her suspicion that Ralph was trying to make a convert of her husband. He had systematically set himself to the work of overthrowing James's faith. He indeed went farther. He wanted to persuade him that there was no future life, and no superintending Power that governs and cares for the interests of man. Ralph had attended Miss Wright's lectures, he had read Tom Paine, he had read many of the sad accounts of the enormities committed by persecuting bigots, and interested priests, in the name of Christ; he had fully possessed himself of all the cant terms and expressions employed by unbelievers in the abuse of Christianity. He had the farther advantage of a ready wit, and a lively vanity, and he was, as he thought, completely armed for the cause of infidelity. He was perfectly ignorant that Miss Wright's lectures contained nothing that had not been advanced and answered long before he or Miss Wright was born: he had never asked if there was any answer to Tom Paine; he had never asked, whether

the religion of selfish priests, and murderous zealots, was, in reality, the Christian religion; nor had he ever carefully weighed the evidence of the existence of a Being whose name he profaned, and whose word he ridiculed and despised. This was the man who called himself the champion of freedom and of truth; while he was, in fact, the slave of his senses and his vanity. Still he was a fearful foe to the happiness of James.

For some days after the time we have spoken of, James avoided Ralph. He felt that he had disturbed his happiness, and he could not help wishing he might never hear him talk again. But James had a real regard for Ralph; he thought him well-meaning; he knew and had experienced his generosity, and he viewed him as an injured man; for he believed there was nothing against him but his opinions, and for these he considered it wrong to censure him. He thought very highly of his talents. "I almost fear," said he, "to talk with Ralph again about the Bible. Even you, Alice, would not find it quite so easy to answer his arguments as you may suppose."

"There is a great deal of nonsense and falsehood that cannot easily be answered," replied Alice; "but that does not prove that it is either sense or reason."

"I am not taking Ralph's side," he answered; "but if you knew more about the matter, Alice, you would not think it so plain that he is always in the wrong. You have never thought of the objections to Christianity; you are ignorant of what wise men have said against it."

"It is true," said his wife; "I know nothing upon the subject but what I have learned from the Bible; all I know is, that I find there satisfactory answers to the questions that my soul would ask about God and a future life. When I look at our sweet Fanny, and see how pale and thin she looks, and fear that she may leave us by the way, my heart aches for the assurance that we shall live again, and meet in another world, where there is no more death; I find it declared in the Bible that we shall. When I see the wicked prospering in the world, because he is rich, and the good man sinking and dying from poverty, I want to be assured that there is a great day of reckoning, when justice shall govern the world; and I see it there declared that God will judge the world in righteousness. I want to be assured that the poor, suffering slave, who cannot plead his own

cause, who cannot tell his own story, has a Friend who sees and pities him, and will one day comfort him; and I find it declared in the Bible, that not a sparrow falls to the ground without the great Father. When trouble is around me, and my mind is disquieted, I go to the history of Jesus, and all is peace and joy. When I want to set before my children an example of perfect goodness, I go to the history of Jesus, and I have found it; and in reading his words I cannot but feel and believe, that never man spake like this man. These are all my arguments, James; to me they are convincing. I suppose that it is my ignorance that makes it so difficult for me to believe that either wise or good men have thought otherwise. I should not be able to answer any objections that were raised by Ralph or any unbeliever; but I nevertheless believe there are sufficient answers to all their arguments. Though my father was a clergyman, yet you know, James, he was poor, and I had to work with my hands, and had very little time to read. I am sorry that I did not make time for the purpose, so that I might now be able to give a reason for the faith that is in me. But I should as soon have thought, upon a beautiful May morning, when every bird seemed to be singing a hymn of praise and gratitude, of studying some dusty book, to find reasons to prove that God made this glorious world, and gave me a heart to enjoy it, before I joined in the universal song of thanksgiving, as I should have thought, before I believed the Bible, of seeking for arguments to prove that God inspired that blessed word, which is the dayspring from on high, and which sets before my rejoicing eyes the glorious morning of the resurrection."

"Dear Alice," said her husband, "I confess that these are better arguments, after all, than Ralph's."

"I do pity my poor cousin Jane," said Alice.

"Why, she truly loves Ralph," said James.

"And the more's the pity that she does; she has poor health, and he'll be the death of her, I fear," answered Alice.

"But don't you think," said James, "that Jane is foolishly scrupulous not to marry Ralph, because he has different opinions from hers? He is not accountable for his opinions, and he is a good, honest fellow."

"I cannot think Jane foolish," said Alice; "I should

do the same thing; for a religious woman to be so intimately connected with an infidel, as in the married state, is like the living being chained to the dead. It is an unequal bargain; he loves her with a selfish, a limited affection; she loves him with an eternal love. Upon that subject which is the highest, the holiest, the one of unfailing interest, they have no sympathy."

"But," said James, "if she holds the truth, if she is right and he is wrong, she may convince him, and so she may save her husband. It appears to me that, according to your own principles, she ought to marry him."

"I think not," said Alice; "if a woman can hope to produce any real change in her lover's religious opinions, she is quite as likely to succeed before as after marriage. It is true, that the importance of the subject ought of itself to be reason enough for fair inquiry; and if it were justly estimated, no earthly happiness would come in competition with it. But we do know, James, that, with such a man as Ralph, to call such a pretty woman as Jane his wife, would influence him far more; and if there is any hope of his giving his mind to this subject, and becoming a Christian, it is for the sake of being her husband."

"He is too proud to be converted by a woman," answered James.

"Say, too vain. Ralph is self-conceited; it was, I think, partly for the sake of being singular that he became an unbeliever."

"If it is only vanity, Jane may cure him of his unbelief, and his vanity too, if she marries him. Believe me, Alice, my love for you has cured many of my faults, let me have ever so many left; depend upon it, I should have been worse without you, Alice. O, do persuade Jane to marry him; rely upon it, he will be a better man."

"Never," answered Alice; "never would I advise a woman to pledge her faith to a man who believes in nothing but what his senses can teach him; who knows nothing of those invisible realities which form the very soul and joy of existence; which insures to her, when her beauty fades and age comes on, a love for that inward bloom, that immortal youth, which the religious man alone can justly estimate."

"But, Alice," said James, "this is selfish. If she really loves him, she ought to think more of his happiness

than of her own, and ought to be willing to make this sacrifice. You know, if she determines not to marry him till his opinions change, and he still holds these opinions, they must be separated, and he may marry an irreligious woman, who may increase all his faults, and insure his ruin, while Jane will remember that she might have saved him."

"I well know," said Alice, "that a tender spirit like Jane's might suffer much from this idea, but I think it a false view of the subject. This is, after all, only a possibility; and if you admit objections like these that might occur on one side, you must do the same on the other. Is it not possible that Ralph might undermine her religious faith? She is ignorant, and has never reasoned upon the subject; all his arguments have a power over her on that account. She has nothing to oppose but feeling. True, this is now her strongest, her highest affection; but can she be sure it will always be so? But, even if she could defend her own soul against the chilling effect of his heartless doctrines, could she defend the souls of her children? and has she a right, with her views, to expose herself to the unutterable agony of thinking, that she has been the means of bringing into this world, so full of the goodness of God, a being who scoffs at his name, and does not acknowledge his power, and numbers himself among the brutes that perish? O James, we have loved, and we do love each other; God is our witness. I have sometimes feared that I loved you too well. But now, this very moment, I would part from you, sooner than have that sorrow at my heart, which Jane would feel, if she could accuse herself of voluntarily choosing, for the father of her children, a man who did not believe in a future life."

James was silent, and looked troubled; how glad would he have been at that moment to possess as firm a faith as his wife in the truths of our religion. He had hitherto been so entirely united with her in feeling and opinion, that while she was speaking, he felt as if he believed as she did; but when she had finished, and he recurred to his own thoughts, he found that doubts, like evil spirits, had entered the paradise of his affections, and had touched with their chilling questionings the holiest bond that can bind mortals together, —a belief in an eternal life. How could he express this to Alice? "After all," he said to himself, "these are only doubts. I must struggle with them like a man. The ene-

my is around me and within me, and I must contend with him alone: but he may yet be conquered, yet I have not yielded him the victory." Alice observed the serious and even sad expression in her husband's face; but she attributed it to his sorrow for Ralph, and thought it was because he was convinced that Jane was right in refusing to marry him while he held his present opinions.

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## PART SECOND.

"WHAT does a miracle mean?" said Fanny to her father, as she and Jemmy came, to claim their place on his knees, during that short, happy hour to children, just before bedtime. "Our teacher in the Sunday school told us to try to find the meaning of the word *miracle*, to bring to her next Sunday. She told us to ask our parents: and we want you, father, to tell us what it means."

James thought a while, and then said, "Do you remember, Fanny, the last summer, when we carried you to see your uncle, at Milton, my taking you into the grist mill, and showing you how they ground the corn?"

"Yes, father, perfectly well. They put the corn into the hopper; and then you showed me how the water turned the wheel, and then how the wheel turned the great round stones, and then how the stones ground the corn into meal."

"Well, Fanny, if the corn had been put into the hopper, and no wheel, or any thing else, had turned the stones that ground it into meal, but it had been put into the hopper, corn, and come out meal, without any thing to change it into meal, we should call it a miracle,—a wonderful thing, above human power.

"As you know the water was changed into wine, at the marriage feast, at the command of Jesus," said Alice.

"Then, father," said little James, "I saw a miracle once."

"How, my boy? what was it?"

"Why, father, I saw some chickens last summer come out of some eggs. Uncle showed me one of the little chickens with his head just peeping out, and he told me that egg had once been exactly like all the other eggs I had ever seen."

"But we do not call this a miracle," replied his father, "because it has always been so; all chickens have been born in this way, and we have all seen it, a great many times."

"Then, father," said Fanny, "a miracle is a very wonderful thing, that nobody has ever seen before?"

Her father was silent; he was thinking of a conversation he had lately had with Ralph about miracles.

"A miracle," said her mother, "is not only a wonderful thing that no one has ever before seen, but it is something contrary to what any one has ever seen. If, for instance, at the bidding of a man, instead of a chicken, a flower were to come out of the egg, we should say he had performed a miracle. Now we know that no one could do such wonderful things unless God gave him the power. So, when Jesus performed miracles, it was to convince people that God sent him."

"I should have thought, mother," said Fanny, "that they could not help believing him, he was so good, and so kind to every one."

"But there were some people," replied her mother, "who did not love goodness, and could not believe in it, because they did not find it in their own hearts. These men would never have believed that he was the Son of God, if he had not worked miracles; they would have considered him a deceiver."

"O! mother," said Fanny, "how could they help believing that he spoke the truth?"

"If," said her mother, "they had been innocent and true themselves, they would have believed him without requiring miracles."

"How happy Jesus must have been, mother, to possess such great power! because he could make sick people well, and bring the dead to life, and make the blind see, and the dumb speak. And how very happy he must have been when he raised Lazarus from the grave!"

"Now, father," said Jemmy, "do tell us the story of the three brothers, who went all over the world to try who could bring back the most wonderful thing."

Their father told them the story; as he finished, Jemmy said, that the piece of tapestry, that carried people wherever they wanted to go, seemed to him the most wonderful

thing; but Fanny preferred the apple that cured the sick if they smelled of it.

"This story," said Fanny, "is not a miracle, for it is not true; but the miracles were true."

"Yes," said her mother; "no one ever believed the story your father has just told you; but millions have believed the miracles. But it is time, my children, to say good-night."

Alice led her children to their quiet pillows; she joined in, and guided their simple prayers—those pure, angelic petitions, for blessings to the kind Father of all, which, more than any other human words, make one feel the divine presence. When she returned to her husband, he resumed the subject of their conversation.

"It appears to me," said he, "that Fanny's notion of a miracle is as correct as yours, or as any that we can obtain. Suppose that we actually witnessed a miracle. We can only say that it is a wonderful thing that we never saw before. That water should be turned into wine is, after all, not so wonderful as that an egg should turn into a chicken. Nature is a series of miracles."

"But you must acknowledge," replied Alice, "that the power which could interrupt or change this succession must be greater than nature itself. It is on this account, is it not? that any interruption of this order (which is what we call a miracle) is more wonderful in fact than any of the most extraordinary things that happen according to the known laws of nature."

"But there is the difficulty, Alice, with unbelievers; they find it very difficult to believe that these laws could be interrupted. The course of nature is so certain, so regular, so exact, that nothing but the testimony of one's senses, and hardly that, could convince one of the reality of a miracle. For instance, it seems to me almost impossible that the sun should not rise and set to-morrow, just as it has risen and set for these many thousand years."

"So it is," said Alice, with a sigh, "that this material sun blinds our dazzled eyes to the glory of Him who placed it in the firmament. The very perfection of the works of God hides their Creator from his creatures. Do you remember, James, those beautiful lines which the minister quoted in his sermon a few Sundays since from a foreign writer? I think I can repeat them.

"'He veils himself in everlasting laws,
Which, and not him, the skeptic seeing, exclaims,
"Wherefore a God? The world itself is God."
And never did a Christian's adoration
So praise him, as this skeptic's blasphemy.'

It seems to me, that, because the world around us is so wonderful and beautiful, some people believe that there can be nothing beyond it; and they do in fact make a God of nature itself, or rather of the laws of nature, as they call them. Better far be like children and believe every thing a miracle, or like the Indian, who thinks that God speaks in the thunder and in the sound of the wind through the trees."

"But, Alice," said James, "if our religion is, as Christians believe, so perfectly adapted to the wants of our nature, and if it could prevail by its truth, what need was there of miracles? You have often said, that in the life and teaching of Jesus you find satisfactory answers to all the questions that your soul asks about God; now, if the Bible, if the instructions of Jesus were proof enough of their divine origin, why were the miracles necessary."

"It seems to me," answered Alice, "that your own remark about the laws of nature is a satisfactory answer to your question. Men had got to think that there was no power greater than nature, and nothing but the testimony of their own senses, and hardly that, could convince them there was."

"But that did not apply to the Jews: they believed in a Supreme Power."

"That is true: still nothing but miracles could convince the Jews that there was any religion, or any views of God, that could be worthy of belief, which were not authorized by the accredited interpreters of their sacred books. Jesus had entirely disappointed them in their conceptions of the Messiah; and what influence could he have had over the mind of a Jew, if he had not been gifted with miraculous powers?"

"I have perceived," said James, "that the children's minds are not much affected by the miracles of Jesus. You noticed that Fanny asked why they would not believe in Jesus, because he was so good. Dear child! she rejoiced that he could perform miracles, only because it enabled him to heal the sick and raise the dead."

"If all hearts were like Fanny's," said her mother, "there would certainly have been no need of miracles to convince people that the religion of Jesus was true. And does not this view of the reception of truth in her pure mind help us more perfectly to understand the meaning of the declaration, 'Except ye become as little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven?' and is it not a beautiful thing, James, to have our children thus bring back to us the religious instruction we have given them, more pure and excellent than we could give it? I never converse with Fanny upon religious subjects without finding my own faith strengthened."

James sat silent and looking very serious, for some minutes, wishing in his heart that he could have such an entire and confiding faith as his wife and child had; but he could not resolve to express his doubts to Alice; he could not bear to give her the pain of knowing how far Ralph had influenced his opinions. At last he said, "Ralph thinks that, if there ever had been such a thing as miracles, there is no reason why there should not be miracles again in order to satisfy the minds of those who cannot be convinced in any other way."

"It seems to me," replied Alice, "from all the information that I have been able to obtain, that the historical evidence of the miracles of Jesus is sufficiently strong; and if so, the miracles which were then performed must have now, on candid minds, the same convincing power as if they were performed before their own eyes. They cannot reasonably expect that God should grant them special aid in discovering the truth, when he has given them power and opportunity to ascertain it by their own faithful exertion."

"But," said James, "we should find it more easy to be satisfied with the historical evidence, if the facts themselves were not so unlike any thing we know from our own experience. Some persons, to be sure, believe that they have themselves experienced such a special aid; but how can they prove to themselves, or others, that they are not imposed upon by their own imaginations?"

"There can," rejoined Alice, "of course be no *outward* proof of such special divine agency; no proof which must satisfy every one, except the performance of miracles. But I do not believe that there is nothing in our own experience

in any way like those wonderful assurances of an ever-watchful Providence, giving us light and strength where our own powers are truly insufficient to the task appointed us."

"But an unbeliever would ask, 'What proof can you bring that any such aid is ever given?"

"The events in the history of our own hearts," replied Alice, "are, to be sure, only matters of personal experience, and not sufficient to serve as proof to others. But, even if we have not ourselves experienced instances of such special divine assistance, it is natural and right that our faith should receive strength from the experience of others, in whose sincerity and conscientious examination of their own hearts, we have reason to repose confidence. But these are special grounds of private faith: and what is most convincing to ourselves, may be little capable of being communicated and brought home to other minds. The simple truth, as it is in Jesus, is sufficient to convince our reason; and where our confidence in our own reason is not strong enough to raise our faith above every temptation to doubt, the miracles he wrought are as a helping hand held out to the sinking spirit. Thus we find in Jesus all that our nature longs for or requires. When he calls upon us 'to judge of ourselves what is right,' he addresses himself to our strength; when he bids us to 'believe him for the very works' sake,' he adapts himself to our weakness."

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"Ralph," said Mr. Vincent, as they sat down to breakfast, "I have thought of the best plan for bringing you to your senses, and making a man of you again." Ralph loved his father, and had a good temper, so he submitted to this humiliating address.

"What are you going to do to me, sir?"

"I am going to marry you right off to Jane."

"Thank you, sir; there is nothing I should like better. But how will you manage the matter? Jane must be consulted, I suppose."

"I'll see to that," said the old man. "I'm going there as soon as I have done my breakfast."

Accordingly Mr. Vincent set off for a visit to Jane, elated with the belief that he should certainly succeed in his undertaking. Jane received the good man with a sincere and affectionate welcome. "As I have not much time to spare, Jane, I must come to the point directly. I mean that you

and Ralph shall be married at once, and I want to have the time and every thing settled before I leave Boston, which will be at eleven o'clock."

Jane was too much accustomed to Mr. Vincent's abrupt manner to be offended with it; and she had a truly filial affection for him. She looked very sad, and seemed unwilling to answer. "Come, Jane," said he, "you are too good and sensible to be uppish about a man's manner when he means right; come, speak up, and say when you'll be ready; here's money enough for gimcracks, and there's enough more where this came from. It's all yours and Ralph's; and for the want of a better let me be your father, and you shan't have any thing to complain of, if I can help it. I can promise you an old man's love, and an old man's blessing, indeed an old man's thanks if you marry my son; and so, if you love him, as I reckon you do, what's to hinder?"

The tears ran down Jane's cheeks, and she still made no answer. The old man fidgeted about, and got up, and walked about the room, and sat down, and then walked about again. "Come, Jenny, dear, take courage and say what's on your mind."

"Ralph knows," at last she said, "why I do not marry him; he knows that I could not venture to trust my happiness with a man that holds such opinions as he does."

"A fiddlestick," said the old man, "for his opinions, or perhaps this stick might be better for them," lifting up his walnut cane: "I tell you, Jane, the boy is only a fool; he's trying to make a brute of himself; but after all he is a man, and he can't help that, and you'll bring him to his senses, if you marry him. Jane, you'll make a man of him again, I'm certain that you will. The yoke will bring him to; there's nothing like the yoke, depend upon it. I've tried it, and I know what it is with the stubbornest creatures; I'll burn all his lying books, and we'll make him go to meeting twice a day, and he'll come out, in three months, as slick as a sheep newly washed and shorn."

"I am afraid," said Jane, "that I should never succeed in changing his opinions, and should run the risk of having my own changed, and so peril my own soul."

"Now, Jane, that's what I call nonsense," answered the old man; "as for your own opinions, you have only to do as I do, and say you won't have them changed; and as for

his opinions, a conceited jackanapes, didn't a woman, a Miss what's her name, Miss Wright, (well named, I'm sure, for she's missed the right, for an honest woman ;) but as I was saying, that Miss Wright, a fool of a woman, has made an infidel of him, and you, a woman of common sense, can't you make him a Christian? I'll lend a hand to the good work, Jane, if you'll only put your shoulder to the wheel first; but it must be your work, for he won't mind me."

Jane drew a deep sigh, and said nothing; she looked very sad. "Come, dear Jenny," said the old man tenderly, "come, consent to marry my foolish boy; bad as he is, he has good stuff in him, though it's his old father that says so. You can save him from ruin, you can save my gray hairs from being brought in sorrow to the grave. Come, consent to be my daughter, my own best child." The tears rolled fast down Jane's cheeks, but she was silent. "Speak, Jane, O speak," said Mr. Vincent; "may I go tell Ralph that you will marry him as soon as all things are ready?"

"I cannot, O, I cannot," said Jane; "I could die for Ralph, I would willingly die to save his soul; but how can I promise before God always to love and honour one who does not believe in Him? O, I dare not do it. How could I expect, how could I pray for his blessing upon us? I can, I do pray day and night, that Ralph may be converted, that his heart may be touched, that he may be turned from the error of his ways; but do not till then ask me to marry him; my conscience forbids it."

The old man looked deeply distressed. "Poor Ralph," he said, and the tears ran down his cheeks, "there is nothing now to save him from his folly. Well," he said, and he struck his cane hard upon the floor, "well, I may as well go home; I might as well have stayed there, for any good I've done by coming. And is this all you've got to say to me, Jane?"

"O!" answered she, "if I could only say to you, how grateful I am to you for your kindness, and if I could only be sure that you would forgive me and still love me! If you knew all I suffered, you would, I am sure, you are so good."

"Poh! poh!" said the old man, "I an't good, or I shouldn't have such a son; I'm afraid I didn't sow the

fear of God in his heart when he was a boy, or he would not have such a crop of weeds in his silly brains. He has not been trained up in the way he should go. Well, I can tell him, however, that he shan't have my money to hire theatres to blaspheme his Maker in, or to buy infidel books with. But it's time for me to go. Good-by: God bless you, Jane, though you have refused the old man; but you mean right, so here's my hand, and you shall be as if you were my own child, though you don't marry that scapegrace of a son of mine." Jane pressed and kissed the hard hand of the good old man, and they parted.

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Alice met her husband at the door, and taking his hand as he entered, "I wish," said she, "to speak with you before you see Fanny." In her eagerness to communicate what she had to say, Alice did not perceive his disturbed expression of countenance, and she went on to relate what her heart was full of. The doctor, she said, had just gone, and had declared that Fanny was fast growing worse; that she was no longer a subject for medicine, and that the only thing that would do her good was a change of air and exercise; that if she could go to ride in good weather, there was a chance for her life, as she was so young. "Now, James, with a little economy, we can manage to meet this expense; and I wanted you to know what the doctor said beforehand, that you might speak of the thing to Fanny in such a way as to prevent her thinking of the cost of riding; for you know she is so conscientious and considerate, that it will be impossible to make her go, if she thinks it is more than we can afford." As Alice finished speaking, her husband sunk down in a chair, and covered his face with his hands. "Don't, my dear husband, be disheartened," said Alice; "her life may yet be spared to us; the doctor seemed to have much hope from the effect of exercise in the open air. It looks as if it would be a fair day to-morrow, and we will begin then and try the effect of it, and take her out every fair day. When you cannot go with her, I will; you can hire a gentle horse that I can drive, and let us hope that this will restore her. I feel as if it would."

As she finished speaking poor James actually groaned aloud. "Yes, I will do it, I will go there," said he; "the sin be upon his head who drives me to it: I will go now and tell Ralph to engage me a place;" and he was

going out of the door, when his wife caught him by the arm and implored him to tell her what he meant. "I mean," said he, "that I have been turned out of the office as an infidel, and that, for aught I know, I shall be a beggar; and that I shall have no money to pay for a chaise for Fanny, unless I can get in at——" He stopped, for he could not bear to tell Alice where he thought of going.

The mind of poor Alice for a moment was bewildered. "But, James, you are not an infidel," she said at last; "and how could you in any way deserve this treatment?"

"No," said James, "I did not deserve it; I am not an infidel."

"Thank God for that," said Alice.

"But if I was, do you think that he has a right to punish me for my opinions?"

"I do not think it would be the best way to make you a Christian," said his wife; "but let us be Christians, James, and he cannot hurt us."

"But he does hurt us," said James. "It will be known everywhere that I was turned out of employ because I was an infidel, and I do not believe that I could get in at any other office but one, and there I must go."

"What office," said Alice, "not the ——"

"The office," said James, "where they print liberal books, as they call them, which means infidel, atheistical, or any other books."

"And will you go there?" said his wife.

"How can I support you and the children? how can I find money to pay for carrying Fanny to ride? shall I see her die, when I might save her life? No, I will go; it is my duty to go; I don't write the books, or make people read them; I only print them instead of another man. I am as innocent as the press itself; I will go." And he was hurrying out of the house.

"James! my husband!" cried Alice, "for the love of God, stop! Consider of it at least till to-morrow; all Christians are not so bigoted as this man; you will get employ in another office. Fear not for the morrow; the money can be obtained. Try to be calm; but above all things do not let Fanny see your trouble. You will feel better to-morrow. My heart is not cast down; my husband is still a Christian; his faith has not been overcome; only compose yourself. Come in, and see our sweet Fanny; she has

been asking for you; she will make you feel better; she seems already one of the kingdom of heaven. Tell her you will take her to ride to-morrow. I know how I can earn the money; do not be anxious about that, my dear James."

The words of Alice fell like oil upon the troubled spirit of her husband. He silently took her hand, and went with her into the chamber of his sick child. "Father, I am so glad to see you! Come and sit close by me. I think I feel stronger when I am holding your's or mother's hand," and Fanny put her little thin hot hand into her father's, as he placed himself by her. The touch opened the fountains of tenderness in James's heart, and the tears ran fast down his cheeks. "Do you know, father," said Fanny, "that the doctor is not going to give me any more medicine? and that he wants me to ride? I am so glad that I have no more of those terrible doses to take; do you think you can take me to ride, father?"

"Yes, my child, you shall go to-morrow; and James felt at the moment as strong a faith as Alice's, that the means could be obtained. All his angry, all his anxious feelings, were lost in one overwhelming fear lest he should have to part with his little Fanny. The child went on. "Father, don't you wish that Jesus was on earth now, that he might heal the sick, and don't you think he would make me well? You know he was always kind to children, and perhaps if you or mother were to go and ask him, when you came home you would find me as well as the centurion did his servant when he returned. Or perhaps he would come to me. The other night when mother was holding me, my pain grew better, and I fell asleep; I dreamed that he took me in his arms, and I waked up and I found mother's arms were close round me. Will you, father, take my Testament, that my teacher at the Sunday-school gave me, and read to me about Jesus healing the sick?" Her father did as she requested him. She listened for a short time; she then grew sleepy, and her mother put her to bed. "Thank you, dear father," she said, as she bade him good night; "I feel better now, and we shall go to ride to-morrow. Shan't we?"

"Yes, my child, we will;" and he kissed her.

Alice's words were verified. Fanny had made her father feel better. He sat silent for a long time, thinking over his intimacy with Ralph, and the arguments he had used to

prove his religion false, and the books he had been induced by him to read. He tried to sum up all the evidence that had been presented to him against the truth of Christianity, and he felt that the simple and confiding faith of this little child was of more weight than the whole of it. As this thought was passing through his mind, he sat with Fanny's Testament still open in his hands, turning over the leaves almost unconsciously, when this passage arrested his attention, *Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall not enter into it.* "Would I were a little child," he said to himself; "would I were in the place of my dear Fanny! How gladly would I die to save her life; how gladly would I die if I could by that means obtain such a sweet confiding faith! I have said I was not an infidel, and, thank God, I am not; but my mind has wandered away from its quiet home of faith and love, and wasted its time and powers like a foolish prodigal. It has fed upon husks, and now has only strength enough left to return and throw itself into the arms of a pitying father. And yet, as Ralph says, if our faith is true, what is the harm of hearing objections made to it, and how could I help the effect they produced? How is it that Alice was never puzzled by Ralph?" As he came to this part of his silent soliloquy, he said aloud to his wife, "How is it, Alice, that your faith is so strong and undoubting? You do not, like Jane, think it is dangerous and even wicked to reason upon the subject; you do not shun argument; but, it seems to me, the more you hear and the more you think, the more satisfied you are of the truth of our religion. You are never tormented with doubts, and I can see that your faith grows stronger and stronger every day. How is it?"

"It is the study of this book," said Alice, putting her hand on the New Testament. "It is the very story itself, which is to me a proof of its truth. It must be true, for any one that could utter a falsehood could not have invented such a story. The character of Jesus is so natural, so all of a piece, so faultless, and yet so real. How came such a story to exist as this book contains, and how came it to be believed for so many years, if it was not true? It is far more difficult to believe it false than to believe it true. And if it is true, then the more we think of it, the more we read it, the more we have it by heart, the more truly shall we believe in it."

"I have not read and studied it enough," said James, "or I have not read it in the right way. I believe it is true, but I do not believe it as you do. With me it is only an acquaintance, but to you, Alice, it is a familiar friend."

"We once began to study it together, you remember, James."

"I do, Alice; and I forsook it for the miserable works of unbelievers. I have too often left the society of my wife and children for the vain and heart-chilling talk of Ralph."

"Let us," said Alice, "begin again to read the Bible together."

"We will," said James; "you and Fanny shall be my teachers." After a few moments James continued; "To tell you the truth, Alice, I think that Ralph keeps up his courage when he talks of annihilation by means of his favourite whisky-punch; and, with the blessing of God, I do believe that it is my promise to abstain from spirituous liquors that has saved me. If I had once begun to drink, my mind would have become muddy, and I cannot tell how far I might have gone. This evening I felt so badly at the thought of being turned out of the office, and of not having any thing for you and the children, that I did really want to drown my cares for a while, till I got over the blow."

"And then," said Alice, "Fanny would not have had her father to read her to sleep, and I should not have had my husband to comfort and bless me."

"Yes," said James, "I should have come with my angry passions inflamed, and my mind stupified, and even you and Fanny could not have made me feel as I do now. I thank God, that I made that promise to you, Alice; it is that which has saved me. I had better have let those books alone, and been studying the Bible with you and Fanny. I had a sort of curiosity to know what these infidels had to say, but I have suffered enough from it."

"And why," said Alice, "have you not told me that you were unhappy?"

"Because," said James, "I could not bear that you should know that I doubted for a moment whether our religion was true; and then, whenever I saw you and the children, I felt better; it seemed as if I caught some of the strength of your faith. This has been my state of mind for months."

"You have," said Alice, "for some time been studying

all on one side of the question; let us now study the other together. Let the past be forgotten."

"All," said James, "except the good lessons we may learn from it; and to-morrow shall be the beginning of a happier life to us."

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## PART THIRD.

Jane loved her cousin Alice very tenderly, and her disinterested nature had sincerely rejoiced in the thought that she was possessed of a happiness which in her own case was not to be hoped for. She had believed that the love of James and Alice was founded upon the basis of a common faith. She knew that Ralph was making every effort to undermine James's religious belief; but, unmoved as she was in her own mind by all his arguments, she had never really believed that he would succeed with James. She well knew the character of Ralph, and his determination that every thing should bend to his wishes; and that this made him often give a false colouring to facts. She doubted the accuracy of the account he had given her of the state of James's views. She accordingly went to see Alice, and inquire into the affair for herself. Alice gave her a simple and full account of the causes of her husband's dismission from the printing office, of his feelings and opinions, and of the present state of his mind. "You know, Jane, that James has ever been one of those who must have proof of every thing. Like Thomas, he must see the print of the nails. His heart is already a believer; and our good doctor is trying to convince him that a right use of his reason will afford him satisfactory evidence of the truth of our religion. He has brought him Sermons on the Evidences, and he has recommended to him to make a careful and faithful study of the history of Jesus as given by the Evangelists. Through these means I hope, and feel assured, that my husband's faith will yet be made whole. And yesterday, Jane, after he had come home from taking our little Fanny to ride, I saw him take the Bible and go into a room by himself. Once or twice, as I went in and out for something, I just caught the expression of his countenance, and he appeared like a man that was reading a story that he had

never read before. Any one might have thought, as they looked at his face, that life or death depended upon the truth of what he was reading."

"And surely," said Jane, "it is life or death that depends upon the truth of this story. O! could not Dr. Howell convert Ralph?"

"They held a long argument last evening," replied Alice, "and I thought that the doctor succeeded in making some impression upon him. He obliged him to acknowledge one or two truths that he began with denying."

"O! thank Heaven," said Jane.

"I expect the doctor again this evening," continued Alice. "I wish it might so happen that Ralph would fall in."

"I shall see him in the course of the day," said Jane, eagerly, "and I will ask him to come here with me." She then bade good morning to her cousin and returned home.

"Mother," said little Fanny, who entered soon after, "I did not quite understand all that was said last evening as I was lying down in the bed-room; but it appeared to me that Doctor Howell was trying to prove that there is a God."

"It is true, my child; he was."

"Is there any one," said Fanny, "who does not believe in God?"

"Yes, my child."

"Then I am sure they cannot think; why, I feel as if I should have known it even if you, mother, had not told me. While you were talking, I was looking up at the moon; and I was thinking that it could not hang up there so beautifully all by itself; that there must be, as you have told me there was, some great and good Power who held it there. There was another reason that came into my mind; it is this happy feeling I have in my sick-room. Why, mother, it does not seem a dull place at all to me. Sometimes, when my body is in pain, and I can hardly move myself, I feel very happy. Even when you are away from me, I do not feel alone; and I am sure it must be, that God is with me then, and makes my heart so happy and strong."

Jane came in the evening, accompanied by Ralph. He said, as he entered, "I hope I shall see that preaching doctor again; for I think he will not get the better of me in

the argument to-night. I suppose you hope, Jane, that he will; I wish you would give up your superstition and listen to reason." With Ralph, this meant, "listen to me." As soon as Dr. Howell entered, Ralph began; "As there are so many of the free inquirers, doctor, who yet believe in a First Cause, I will relinquish that argument to you; but I think you will have to give up the argument in favour of revealed religion." This he said with an air of great confidence, and as if he was sure of victory.

Dr. Howell answered very quietly, "I should be glad to hear your arguments; and if I can find no answer to them, I will give up and acknowledge I am conquered, and hope that some more worthy champion may take up the cause."

"In the first place," said Ralph, "we deny the truth of the miracles. We think, with Mr. Hume, that it is a much more probable thing that a story should be invented, than that the laws of nature should be violated. There may have been such a man as Jesus, but all the wonderful stories about him are the inventions of his followers."

"Have you ever read the Dudleian Lecture, upon Hume's argument, or any other treatise in defence of the miracles?"

"No!" said Ralph.

"A *free-inquirer* should read both sides or he has hardly a right to his name. If you had read only those remarks, you would have learned that this argument of Hume proves too much. We have the book here, and we will refer to the very words. 'This argument of Hume's,' says the writer, 'proves too much, and therefore proves nothing. It proves too much; for if I am to reject the strongest testimony to miracles, because testimony has often deceived me, whilst nature's order has never been found to fail, then I ought to reject a miracle, even if I should see it with my own eyes, and if all my senses should attest it, for all my senses have sometimes given false reports, whilst nature has never gone astray; and, therefore, be the circumstances ever so decisive or inconsistent with deception, still I must not believe what I see, and hear, and touch, what my senses, exercised according to my most deliberate judgment, declare to be true. All this the argument requires; and it proves too much, for disbelief in the case supposed is out of our power, and is instinctively pronounced absurd; and, what is more, it would subvert that very order of nature on

which the argument rests: for this order of nature is learned only by the exercise of my senses and judgment, and if these fail me, in the most unexceptionable circumstances, then their testimony to nature is of little worth.'

"In the preceding paragraph, the writer adduces another argument, which, to a believer in the existence of God, I should think would have great weight. He says; 'If there is a Being higher than nature, the origin of all its powers and motions, and whose character falls under our notice and experience as truly as the creation, then there is an additional standard, to which facts and statements are to be referred; and works, which violate nature's order, will still be credible, if they agree with the known properties and attributes of its author; because, for such works we can assign an adequate cause and sufficient reasons, and these are the qualities and conditions on which credibility depends.'"

"This argument is not much to me," said Ralph; "all these things I consider as dreams."

"I cannot say so," said James; "my reason teaches me that there is a God, a Creator; and I cannot help attaching certain attributes to him. I cannot help thinking that, if there is a God, he must have a regard for the beings he has created, that he must be just and good."

"And if," said the doctor, "there is a Creator, and he is just and merciful, what is there strange or difficult in believing that he may interrupt the order of nature, which he himself has established for a beneficent purpose, when a more beneficent purpose is answered by its interruption than by its continuance? We see a peculiar call for this exertion of his power, when men, from the very perfection of his works, are induced to stop short of the mighty hand that has set every thing in order, and worship the result instead of the cause."

"But we worship nothing," said Ralph.

"I ask pardon; I must deny that. Miss Wright and other infidel writers recognise and deify nature, the law of nature, the order of things, as if it were a Supreme Power. There is only this difference; they ascribe all things, visible and invisible, to an unintelligent, unconscious something, a sort of blind, irresistible chance, a stern, unmeaning fate; while the Christian ascribes law and order, the effects of intelligence, to an intelligent cause; and consequently sees, in the laws

of nature and the order of things, the evidences of an omnipotent intelligence, the works and the government of the God of nature; in short, the infidel believes in an omnipotent ignorance, and the Christian in an omnipotent wisdom."

"But," said Ralph, "what has this to do with the question of miracles?"

"Why, much; all that a Christian demands;" answered the doctor. "If we acknowledge a Power superior to nature, then what objection is there to believing in miracles? Admit design, and power to accomplish design, and then we have but two questions to ask; What was the design of miracles? and, Is there sufficient historical evidence that they were actually performed?"

"Ah, there's the rub," said Ralph; "how can you prove the facts?"

"It is impossible to do justice to such an argument in a small compass," said Dr. Howell; "but I will ask you a few questions. Do you doubt whether such a man as Jesus Christ really lived?"

"Why, I suppose a man so called did live."

"That such a man lived, and called himself the Messiah, and was crucified by Pontius Pilate, is a matter of history, and proved by the writings of those who were enemies of his religion. The next question is, What was his character and his conduct? What did he teach? What, in short, was his history? Now we find four different accounts of the life of Jesus, written near enough to the time when he lived to have made it possible to detect and expose any false statements they might contain. They all agree in describing him as a model of the most perfect, of an unheard-of excellence; while he declared himself to the Jews as the Messiah, still disdaining to avail himself of their selfish prejudices and narrow preconceptions of his character and mission. He stands all alone in unapproachable purity: instructing those who despised him; reproving the wicked though in power; comforting and blessing the poor, the afflicted, the forsaken; healing the sick, raising the dead, declaring to all a life to come, a day of future rewards and punishments. We see him foregoing all the comforts, all the pleasures of this world; devoting every moment of his existence to the promotion of the highest interests of men, and finally laying down his life for them, by volun-

tarily submitting to an ignominious death to prove the truth of his mission and bring them to God. We hear of him again, rising from the tomb, and declaring to his disciples, that he was going to his Father and their Father, and that they and all his true disciples should follow him.

"This story is told by four different men, agreeing in all essentials, and yet with such differences in each narrative as might naturally happen, which on this account increase the credibility of the whole, as they remove all suspicion of any preconcerted plan. If this story be true, we must believe in all that it teaches. If it be false, we have to believe that the most sublime, the only model of perfect excellence ever held up to the admiration of mankind was drawn by impostors; that the most exalted conception of moral truth ever presented to man was given by deceivers; who contrived this fiction and devoted themselves to the defence of it, not with any hope of worldly advantage, but with the certainty of persecution and the prospect of death for their reward. Surely, if the infidels can believe this, they have a capacity of belief, a blind credulity, which exceeds that of the greatest enthusiast in religion ever known, nay, even of the wildest fanatics."

Ralph fidgeted about, and, strange to say, was not prepared with an answer. He had never read, he had never heard any calm argument in defence of Christianity: all his learning, all his skill, had been exercised in finding arguments against it. He was prepared for abuse, for persecution, for any thing but reason. Ralph's self-conceit, which had eaten up all the better qualities of his nature, was most sorely fretted by being worsted in an argument in the presence of Jane, whom he yet hoped to convert to his own views, and of James, who had never been able to foil him in debate. Anger at last helped him to words. "It's not worth while," said he, "to talk about these things with any one who can swallow down all the marvellous stories in the Bible. I can only say, like the poor negro, 'I won't believe any of them.'"

"Efforts of wit," said the doctor, coolly, "are very common and very easy upon religious subjects; but when Lord Bacon declared, 'that he would rather believe all the fables of the Talmud and the Koran, than that this universal frame is without a Mind,' he by his single name left a shield broad enough to defend any coward who might be

frightened by the shafts of real wit, or the sticks and stones that the ill-furnished hands of the ignorant may cast at him on account of his belief."

Ralph perceived that he had merely offended the doctor's taste ; and he felt somewhat as the man does, who is convicted of a vulgarism or an impropriety in the presence of one of pure and refined manners and feelings. He made another effort at getting upon tenable ground. "Look, sir," he said, with an oratorical air, "look at the whole history of the clergy, or rather at the bloody story of priestcraft. Let the gloomy walls of the Inquisition reveal their frightful secrets. In whose name have all these enormities been committed?"

"In the hallowed name of Him," answered the doctor, "whose whole life and every word denied and rebuked such deeds. In the name of the peaceful Jesus, who taught that all men are brethren, blood has been shed like rain ; in the name of Him who denied himself, who refused all the distinctions of the world, who preached against earthly glory, who washed his disciples' feet, who declared that he came to minister to others ;—in his meek and holy name, power has been usurped ; the dearest rights of men have been trampled upon ; wealth has been unjustly accumulated and expended upon lawless passions and sinful pleasures, while the poor, whom he came to save, have starved in the sight of the feast that they might not approach. Yes, these things, and worse than these,—cruelties not to be named, have been committed by men who have dared to call themselves Christians. I know all this well."

"How, then," said Ralph, "can you vindicate such a system?"

"Because I find," answered the doctor, "that for all these things the life and the teachings of Jesus not only furnish no apology, but are in direct contradiction to them ; and because I find further, that, in opposition to these traitors to the holy cause of Jesus, there is an innumerable army of those who have taken up the cross and followed their Master's steps,—who have relinquished for his sake all that life has to give,—who have suffered tortures without uttering a complaint,—who have died, rejoicing that they died for his religion. More than this, I see millions humanized by faith in him. I see his ministers all over the world, carrying comfort to the broken-hearted, giving

instruction to the ignorant, strength to the weak, and joy to the desponding. I see them calling the thoughtless to consider, the mistaken and erring to learn wisdom, the sinful to repent. I see both these pictures; both are equally true. I have, however, a firm faith that truth will yet conquer error; that the religion of Jesus, as it is in its original purity, will prevail. This is the system I defend, because I am convinced it is the truth."

"It seems to me pretty plain," said Ralph, "that a system which produces such very opposite effects must have something wrong in it; that it cannot, as you pretend, come from Heaven."

"I come to no such result," said the doctor; "when I am satisfied, as I am from a faithful study of the history of Jesus Christ, that no evil effect can fairly be attributed to it; that his religion sanctions no principle and no action that is not in strict conformity with the law of reason and the law of love; I see, in all the evil that has been done in his name, only a proof of the tendency of mankind to indulge their own selfish passions; and their power to do this necessarily belongs to that moral freedom which is essential to virtue. Men cannot be constrained to be good or religious; it involves a contradiction in terms: goodness must be their free choice, and the effect of the highest and best use of their own powers."

"Well," said Ralph, "doctors will disagree. I can't say I'm satisfied, but it is too late to bring up any more arguments to-night."

"There is," said Doctor Howell, "one subject which I wish to discuss with you; upon which, if you are a true disciple of Miss Wright, we essentially agree, and respecting which we may therefore end more to your satisfaction. It is the capacity of man for improvement, which she recognises as his distinguishing characteristic. I shall visit my little patient to-morrow evening, and should like to talk further with you then, if it is agreeable to you."

Ralph bowed, and giving his arm to Jane with rather a dissatisfied look, said, "Good-night;" and the little party broke up.

The discussions that Jane had listened to between Ralph and the doctor had convinced her of the perfect hopelessness of any change in his views. She had long felt persuaded that it was right and best for her to be separated

from him entirely. She said nothing to him on the subject during her walk home, as she wished to avoid a scene that she felt herself unequal to bear. Her own mind had been strengthened and enlightened by what she had heard, and she felt, what she had never before experienced, a courage to do in this case what she was satisfied it was right should be done. The thought of the pain it would give Ralph softened her feelings towards him; and when she broke the silence that she had maintained till they had reached her door, by bidding him good-night, it was in a tone of unusual tenderness.

"Why, dear Jane," said Ralph, "that 'Good night' should mean 'Walk in;'" and he kept her hand and was about entering.

"No, Ralph; I am fatigued, I cannot ask you to walk in."

Ralph seemed resolved to enter. "You must not come in," she said; "good-night, Ralph! we must part now," and she hurried into the house.

Ralph could hardly tell the reason, but he felt greatly disturbed. "Why," said he to himself, "Jane spoke to me as if she really loved me; and yet, if she does, how is it that she will not marry me? It is strange that she can make such a point of my believing as she does. How kindly, how tenderly, and yet how sorrowfully she said 'Good-night.' It's a pity I could not be turned into a Christian, to please her and my father. I wish I was like Jane; I am not good enough for her, that's true. Heigh ho! that preaching doctor has made me nervous; I must take something to screw me up again." Ralph took his usual *night-cap*, as he called it, and awoke in the morning the same vain and conceited being as ever.

The next time Ralph called to see Jane, he was told that she was gone into the country, and had left for him a letter.

"Dear Ralph,

"You are indeed dear to me, too dear, you well know it; we have loved each other from our childhood, but we must part; a higher duty, a holier love than any mortal should inspire, commands it. I must not speak of my rebellious heart; He who has made it so tender, will, I trust, forgive its weakness, and accept the sacrifice I now make, and give me the strength I so much need. I never

could be happy as your wife ; the bond between us would want the sanction of Him who is the source of all true affection ; you could not unite with me in praying for His blessing, for you do not believe in Him. In my highest duty, in my purest happiness, I should be separated from my husband. I feel assured that my best affections must be immortal ; you believe only in time, and can love me only with a limited love. Ralph, this is not an equal affection. I could not be satisfied with the love of an unbeliever. I believe I have a soul, a never-dying soul. I believe that you have one also : if we were married, our souls ought to mingle together and become at it were one ; then we could look with calmness upon the certain decay and change of these frail bodies ; for that within us which was the source and life of our love would be growing stronger and stronger, and becoming more pure forever. But this belief, which would be the substantial happiness of my life, my every-day joy and support, would be to you a dream. This would, this indeed does, make a gulf between us. What, according to your views, do you love in me ? My fading cheek, that your fancy has been pleased with ; a form that youthful recollections have endeared to you ; a something which you see and hear, and which is pleasing to you ; but this is passing away so fast that you really love a spectre, an unreal thing. For what your senses can discover of me will soon have vanished from this world, and you believe in nothing beyond. I must love something real and enduring. I must be loved for what is real, unchanging, immortal in myself. I cannot be willing to be loved as a flower, that is plucked in the morning and cast away in the evening ; I cannot give an undying love to a dying thing,—neither can you ; if there is no soul, no futurity, no eternity in our love, there is no reality in it to me.

"These feelings and opinions have produced a settled conviction in my mind, that it is my duty to separate myself entirely from you. I must not dwell upon the pain this effort gives me. I was an orphan when our love for each other began ; I had no brother or sister ; you know how my heart has clung to you ; how you have taken the place of every other earthly relation and affection. The love that most women divide among many near and dear friends, has in my case been stored up for one, for you alone. I have given you my heart in its youth, in its first glow,

in all the strength of its love, as God gave it to me. You then need not be told what it costs me to part from you; to give up the dearest hope of my life, and to cast myself into the solitude we feel when there is no one to whom we may devote our whole hearts. Let the thought, dear Ralph, of my sufferings give you at least the sad comfort that you do not suffer alone, and let it,—O how fervently do I pray Heaven it may!—let it lead you to think more seriously of that religion, of that belief in a future life, which requires our separation. Look into your own soul,—indeed you have one, an undying soul,—O look into it; call upon it, and it will declare to you its own rights, it will reveal itself to you. O, if your love for me is what mine has ever been for you, you must feel as if there was something within you that is not of this earth, a something that cannot die; if you do not cast off in a day the remembrance of your old playmate, of your tenderest friend, of one whom you would have made your wife—if this remembrance, and this early love still clings to your heart, O let it teach you that there is something spiritual within you, something that shall live again when these bodies die. If, Ralph, by the sacrifice not only of my earthly happiness but even of my life, I could waken your slumbering soul to a belief in itself, in its own immortality, suffering would become unutterable joy, and death would be a new life to me.

"And now farewell! dear Ralph, farewell!—May that Being, whom you do not believe in, still bless you, and one day bring you to himself. May that love, which you slight and turn away from, yet constrain you to throw yourself into His protecting arms, and, as a penitent child, may you yet be received and comforted. My prayers will go up to His mercy-seat with every rising and every setting sun, that you may be saved. Surely this hope and this love I may yet indulge. Again, farewell!

"Ever your true friend,

"JANE."

Ralph felt smitten to the heart by this letter. The pure love for himself, the heroic devotion to principle, which it manifested, for a moment awakened in him all that was left of what was generous and pure and tender in his nature. He had never loved Jane so deeply, so truly, as at that moment, when he saw himself deprived of the hope of be-

ing united to her, even of the happiness of seeing her, and hearing her, and being allowed to express his love to her. He felt like our first parents when turned out of Paradise; all the delight of existence seemed to have suddenly vanished out of his reach; all the decorations, the nameless charms which imagination and sentiment hang round the path of life, were swept away, as if by a cold wind. There was to him nothing left but a chilling, dull reality; he felt all alone and desolate. That spiritual and immortal nature within him, which he denied, had unconsciously to himself been called forth by the pure-minded being whom he had truly loved; and now, when it had lost this only object of its affection, it came back asking to whom it should go. It had denied the power from whence it sprung, and Ralph felt its presence and reality by its intense and hopeless sufferings, its unceasing cry of misery. Had he listened to this cry of his own suffering soul, had he called upon his reason to hear and explain the prophetic lament of an abused and neglected nature, Jane's prayer might then have been answered, and he might have been saved. He felt the divinity stirring within him, but he turned a deaf ear to the heavenly messenger; he called up passion, fiery, unrestrained passion to his relief.

"This," he said, "is the effect of this hateful religion; it destroys every natural affection; it wars against every thing real and true, and sacrifices every thing to its wild dreams, its cruel commands, its visionary virtue. It has made Jane, who by nature was formed so gentle and true, unfaithful to her promises, cruel to one who she knew loved her, and whom she herself loved; she has used me ill, she has forsaken me; nothing but her religion would have induced her to have left me here to despair. She begs me," he continued, "to think of the cause of our separation: she need not fear that I shall forget it; no! my whole life shall be spent in opposing such an unnatural and hard-hearted system. Well has Miss Wright said, that it is the cause of all the evil there is in the world; I hate it; I have nothing now to live for, but to revenge myself upon it by overthrowing its altars and exposing the absurdities of its followers, and, most of all, of its ministers. I hate them; I hate the world that are their dupes; I hate myself for living among them, and being a man; better be a dog, a horse, any thing that does not pretend to be religious, than

a miserable, deluded Christian. I'll keep no terms with them now; I will devote every farthing I earn, every faculty I possess, all my time to this great cause. Jane has broken the only bond between me and Christians; now they are all my enemies."

Thus fortified by the evil spirits of anger and revenge, Ralph set out with a new and almost fiendish determination to defend the cause of infidelity, and with a feeling of personal animosity towards a religion, the object of which is to bring peace on earth and good-will to men.

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The change in little Fanny from this life to another was fast going on. The pure and innocent child was fast becoming one of those who constitute the unseen kingdom of heaven. The preternatural brightness of her eye, her high, expanded forehead, the snowy whiteness of her skin, and the almost unearthly expression of her whole face, gave sure indications that the spiritual was fast prevailing over the material nature, that the youthful soul was fast laying aside its earthly vestment and preparing for its upward flight. Alice saw and felt the sadly beautiful prophecy of her child's departure; the mother's heart still hoped, still prayed that it might not be true, that she might still retain her treasure here; and this nerved her hand to perform all those thousand little services which the sick and the dying require to smooth the painful passage from time into eternity. James sat by her bedside and watched her, till it seemed as if his soul became one with hers, and as if he caught some glimpses of a future life through her purified vision.

"Read to me, dear father," she would say in every interval of ease. "Read to me about Jesus, about his raising Lazarus, and how he loved little children and blessed them. When I go to heaven, will he love me as well as you and mother do, and be as kind to me?"

When she saw that her father could not, from grief, answer her question, she would draw his hand to her hot lips and kiss it, and say, with a smile, "Do not cry, dear father; you know that you and mother and brother and sister will soon come after me, and then we shall never part again." At other times she would express a wish that she might stay longer in this pleasant world, and not leave those she loved so dearly; but this state of mind was soon fol-

lowed by a calm and cheerful submission to her heavenly Father's will.

"God is good," she would say; "I know God is good, and I will try to bear my pain, and to be willing to die, mother." Thus her sweet spirit gradually ascended to the world of spirits, leading home in its upward flight the souls of her earthly parents. O! who can tell what revelations of a future life may be vouchsafed to the pure mind of a child in that mysterious hour, when the new-born spirit bursts its prison-house, and enters upon another life, its innocence unstained, its brightness undimmed by the contamination of earth. Such beings seem to hold a more exalted place, to have a higher mission in this life than the rest of mankind. They come as messengers from heaven to us; their angelic looks, their pure lives, are their credentials. They come to declare to us the existence of the spiritual world; they go, that they may carry back our captive hearts with them; they constrain us to love them; they bid us remember them; they call upon us to follow them. Surely, short as their existence may have been, they have not lived in vain. So felt James and Alice in that solemn hour, when they looked upon their sweet Fanny as an angel of God, and saw that her mortal part had faded and died in their arms, and that her spirit had gone to Him who gave it.

They pressed the lifeless remains, the beautiful image of their child, to their aching hearts; they wept, sorrowing that they should see her face no more. No more in this life; but reason and the word of God promised that she should live again; and it seemed to them as if her soul, before its departure, had declared to them its immortality. Never had these parents felt so truly convinced that death could have no power over the soul of their child, as at this moment of bereavement; never was her intellectual, her moral existence, so real to them as now, when there was no answering voice from her to the questions their hearts were asking of the present state of felicity they felt assured she had entered upon. As James and Alice sat silent, watching the lifeless body of their precious child, the violence of their grief at her loss was assuaged by the indescribable look of sublime peace, almost of joy, in her face. What is the cause of this beautiful appearance, no one can explain; but all who have watched the dead, have observed

it. It is a look, as though the departed spirit smiled once more through its mortal features, to assure the weeping friends of its existence and happiness; it seems to say to us, "Peace be unto you. Why are ye troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?"

The evening after James and Alice had committed the remains of their beloved child to the dust, they were sitting together with the clergyman and their friend the doctor, talking over the simple story of little Fanny's life; the contemplation of which, while it awakened sorrow for her loss, brought with it a solemn, a sacred joy,—the promise of an abiding peace. In one of those pauses in the conversation, when the mind of each one was so absorbed as to be unconscious that there was no outward expression of thought, there was a hard knock at the door. James went to see who was there; and only stopping to say to his wife, that he was sent for on urgent business and could not say at what hour he should return, he left them.

The clergyman and Dr. Howell soon after took their leave, and Alice was left alone with her sleeping children. Then, for a while, when no duty called upon her for immediate performance, then did the thought of the dead, of the departed one, swallow up all thoughts of the living; then for a time, in solitude and silence, did that intense anguish come over her heart, which will not be stayed; she threw herself upon the vacant bed of her little Fanny, and wept, as the mother will weep over the loss of the child of her bosom, as the God of nature meant she should; and here we leave her, to follow her husband to the sad scene to which he had been so suddenly called.

It was a message from Ralph which James had received, the purport of which was, that he had a few words to say to him, but that they would be his last; and the messenger added that he believed he was dying. He said that he had heard the report of a pistol, and, shortly after, Ralph's bell was rung violently; that when he answered the call, he found him lying on the sofa, but that Ralph had only given him the message which he had just delivered.

When James entered the room, Ralph made an effort to sit up and to reach him his hand, but immediately fell back again on the sofa.

"I have made a bungling piece of work of it," said he; "I thought I knew the right place, but I suppose I got ner-

vous after all; I did not like to put it to my brains; I choose to look like a man even when I am dead; but it will be all over soon, and we have no time to lose; so sit down close by me, James. I should like to send a message to ——" Here he stopped from faintness. James perceived that he was holding his side to stop the blood; he rang the bell, sent for the doctor, and did the best he could for his dying friend till he came. The doctor pronounced the wound to be mortal, and only administered what his art could furnish to alleviate his sufferings, and then sat down by him with James to watch and assist him in his parting hour. At intervals, as his strength permitted, he uttered the following incoherent sentences. "Tell my father I was tired of living, and so I thought I might as well quit. That was a hard letter. James, do you really believe there is a God? It can't be helped now. My poor father! I hope he'll pay my debts; but don't speak to him about the letter. It will be all over soon. Comfort the old man, if you can. It wasn't the letter. Can it be, that all does not end here? If the doctor is right, what will become of me? Give me some drink. I am very nervous. Poor dear Jane! How clumsy I was! She loved me truly. I have a queer feeling as if the power that put the pistol to my breast was something different from this dying body. There is a question for you, doctor. Can the body kill the body? It puzzles me. But what's the use of thinking now? It's a frightful gulf I've jumped into. Don't tell Jane of it. I had nothing left to live for. She was too good for me. Can you be right, doctor? No! no! How dark it is! Who stays when the entertainment is over and the lights are out? James, do you really believe we shall all live again? But it's too late now; I shall soon be at rest. Yes, at rest. That's the truth. Eternal rest! These dreams torment me. O this thirst! They shan't have a death-bed confession from Ralph Vincent. Give me that punch?"

The doctor reached him a little cold water; but before he could get it to his lips, Ralph was in the convulsions of death, and his soul had hastened unbidden into the presence of the Supreme Judge of all.

An awful stillness reigned in the apartment for some minutes after. The hour of death, when it comes at the appointed time to the trusting Christian, who calmly and cheerfully goes at the call of his Creator to new scenes of

virtue and higher happiness, is still a deeply solemn time; but when he who believes this life to be the whole of existence, rushes, unbidden, unprepared, from time into eternity, the whole soul shudders at the contemplation of the fearful, the presumptuous crime; and death is clothed with a new and an intolerable terror. There was no word of comfort uttered; there was no uplifted eye, as if seeking to pierce the veil that hid from mortal vision the inconceivable bliss of the departed spirit; there was no tear of ecstacy at the remembrance of the declaration, "He is not dead, but sleepeth." Death, and death only, was present to their minds; death, voluntarily chosen for the sake of its eternal stillness; the coward's exchange for painful duty; the cold, the frightful paradise of the infidel. Motionless and silent, the doctor and James sat looking at the lifeless remains before them, till their very souls seemed chilled at the terrible picture, and the frightful story that belonged to it.

Dr. Howell was the first to make an effort to shake off the paralyzing effect of the scene they had witnessed, and to remember that there were duties to perform. He undertook the care of the lifeless body; and upon James devolved the painful task of informing the unhappy father of the event.

When James entered his own house, he found Alice anxiously waiting his return. She had suspected the message was from Ralph, but her simple heart little anticipated such a scene as her husband had been called upon to witness. "God be merciful to him!" was her first exclamation, after James had told her of all that had passed. "O, his poor old father!" was the next; "poor dear Jane too! how will they be comforted?"

"When we stood over the death-bed of our dear Fanny," said James, "while my heart ached so bitterly at the thought of losing her, I yet knew nothing of death; but this night I have seen death in all its terrors. O, Alice, from what have I been saved! how do I thank my God that I have been saved from the frightful death of the unbeliever! It seemed as if his soul, that he had so abused, so denied, would once more be heard in its own vindication. He felt its existence, and that instinctive belief in a future life, which he had called superstition, returned upon him like an accuser before the bar of God, into whose presence he

had so rashly hurried. O, Alice, it is not argument alone, it is not reasoning alone, that will satisfy us; but it is turning our attention to this something here within us, this consciousness of immortality placed here by our Creator; it is listening to its teachings and trusting to its declaration, that there is a God, that we are spiritual beings, that the soul cannot die, that we shall all live again. It was pride, and vanity, and sensuality, that ruined Ralph; his own soul, if he had not slighted its warnings, would have led him right. How can men desire to silence this voice of God within them, and turn themselves into brutes? O, Alice! and I too was once deaf to this holy word spoken to every man at his creation, telling him that he is a living spirit."

James bowed his head and wept at the recollection of his own errors, and in humility and silence prayed fervently to the God of mercy for his friend.

Early the next morning James set off upon the melancholy errand of informing old Mr. Vincent of the death of his son. "I am sorry to leave you at this time," said he to Alice, "but I had better go myself, I think."

"Never mind me," answered his wife; "think only how you can best break the sad news to the unhappy old man."

"Had I not better disguise from him the manner of Ralph's death?"

"I have never believed," answered Alice, "that any good can come from deception, or that we have a right to use it; I am always for having the truth met and endured at first; strength is ever given when it is rightly sought for. You, I know, will tell him as gently and as tenderly as possible; and the terrible story had better be told him by a friend."

Mr. Vincent on his return home had been much disappointed in not finding a letter from his son; and when James arrived at his house next day, he was standing at the door, watching for the return of his messenger from the post-office. He was immediately struck with the expression of James's countenance, but, observing his mourning dress, he attributed it entirely to his sorrow at the loss of his child; and for a moment the kind-hearted old man forgot his own anxieties in his sympathy for the bereaved father. "You have lost your little girl, I see," said he, as he took James's hand; "I am sorry for you, but she was a good child."

This change of thought and feeling was a great help to James in his sad task; it enabled him so to command himself, that he entered the house and saw Mr. Vincent seated in his own old-fashioned elbow-chair, before his mind was again turned upon his son.

"When I first saw you," he said, "I thought you might have a letter from my Ralph; have you seen him lately?"

"I have," said James; but an involuntary shudder came over him as he uttered the words.

Mr. Vincent perceived it. "And—and—what's the matter? Something has happened."

"Yes," said James.

"What? Tell me what? Is he alive?"

James seized the old man's hand, and answered only by that dreadful silence that announces unutterable sorrow.

"O God! my son! my only child!" groaned out the old man. "Why did he not send for me? Was it a fever?"

"No."

"What was it?"

James could not answer. The sight of the old man's agony so palsied his faculties, that he knew not what to say. The unhappy father asked no more questions. James's looks and answers had served to reveal to him the truth; his sufferings were too great for nature to endure, and he fell senseless upon the floor.

It was some time before he came perfectly to himself, and then there was a sort of iron composure in his whole aspect. He insisted upon knowing every particular; he wished to hear every word he had said. When James repeated to him the words, "Comfort the old man, if you can," he groaned, and wept like a child, but soon afterward he recovered himself and begged James to go on. After he had heard all, he went out of the room and ordered his horse to be put to his wagon.

"You will return with me," said he.

"Where are you going?" said James.

"To *him*," he answered, with a sort of convulsive calmness. "Dead or alive, he's my son: and who will now be by him and follow him but his father? I must be with him."

James did not oppose him; and sad and dreadful as were these last duties to his lost child, the old man felt a consolation in their performance. He saw the grave close over

what had been to him the dearest object in life, his only son, who had voluntarily resigned life, duty, and happiness, and with no hope for the future. All his worldly ambition was smitten to the earth ; he stood like a blasted tree, upon whose branches no green leaf should ever again be seen. James and Alice persuaded him to pass the night with them ; there was a fixed sorrow in his face, but he did not speak of his sufferings or of any thing that was past. The next morning he returned home.

# No. IV.

## PLAN OF READING.

### PART FIRST.

### SELECTION OF BOOKS.

BY JOEL HAWES, D. D.

In the choice of books there is great need of caution; particularly in the spring season of life, while the mental and moral habits are yet in a process of formation. A person may be ruined by reading a single volume. The authors with which you are most familiar can hardly fail to impress on your minds their own image and superscription. Your habits of thinking, your sentiments, your social and moral feelings, your whole character will receive their shape and colouring, very much from the books you read. If these are wisely selected and properly studied, they will enlighten your minds, improve your hearts, and establish your character on the firm basis of virtue and piety; if otherwise, they will enfeeble your intellects, corrupt your principles, and destroy your happiness. It is a maxim, then, ever to be borne in mind, *take heed what ye read.*

*To acquire useful information; to improve the mind in knowledge, and the heart in goodness; to become qualified to perform with honour and usefulness the duties of life, and prepared for a happy immortality beyond the grave,—these are the great objects which ought ever to be kept in view in reading. And all books are to be accounted good or bad, in their effects, just as they tend to promote or hinder the attainment of these objects.*

Taking this as the criterion by which to regulate your choice of books, you will, I think, be led to give an important place to *historical reading*, especially to that which relates to our own country. History is the mirror of the world. In it we behold the origin and progress of

society, the rise and fall of empires; we become acquainted with the institutions, laws, manners, and customs of different nations, trace the course, and witness the progress of that silent, but mighty current that is continually bearing men and all their works into the gulf of oblivion, and see, as in a moving picture, the generations of our race, as they have risen into being, acted their part on the stage of life, and passed in quick succession with the years beyond the flood. Such scenes, contemplated in the light of authentic history, are replete with the most interesting and profitable lessons. Especially are they so, when they relate to our own country. And with the history of our own country every American citizen ought to be familiar. It is the history of a new world; of a new state of society, established for new purposes, developing new views of the character and destiny of man; and marked, in every stage of its progress, with the most signal interpositions of a gracious and all-pervading Providence. No history on earth is more interesting and instructive than that of New England. The heart of man and the hand of God are visible in every part of it; and every person, come to years of maturity, ought to be acquainted with it. "Whence we sprung; from what race, at what time, in what circumstances, for what objects, and by what means, has the country to which we belong, risen to its present glory and happiness," are inquiries, most deeply interesting in themselves, and to which every son and daughter of New England ought to be able to give a clear and rational answer.

In addition to a knowledge of our own history, some acquaintance with the government and laws of the society in which we live, would seem an almost indispensable qualification of a good citizen. In ancient Rome, the very boys were obliged to learn the twelve tables by heart, as a necessary lesson to imprint on their tender minds an early knowledge of the laws and constitution of their country. This was a wise regulation; and if something of the kind were required of all our youth, the utility of it would no doubt be very great.

Nearly related to history, and not less important, is *biography*. This is a kind of reading most happily adapted to minds of every capacity and degree of improvement. While it possesses a charm that can hardly fail to interest the feelings and engage the attention even of the most in-

curious and least instructed, it furnishes lessons of wisdom and prudence by which the wisest and the best may be profited. It makes you acquainted with the fairest and most excellent specimens of human character. It introduces you into the society of the great and the learned, the wise and the good; you mingle and associate with them in all their walks and ways; you hear them converse; you see them act; and mark the steps by which they attained their excellence, and rose to their elevation in honour and influence. The effect of this cannot be otherwise than eminently happy. While conversant with such characters, a process of assimilation will be going on in your own minds. You will feel within you an influence, raising you above whatever is base and polluting, and inspiring in you the love of whatever is noble and excellent.

As to the miscellanies of the day, such as newspapers, pamphlets, and periodicals of various name, it is difficult to assign them their proper place in a course of reading. Some acquaintance with them seems indispensable. And yet a man who should attempt to read even a small part of what comes in his way, under the character of miscellany, would find time to read nothing else, and, what is worse, he would be likely to acquire a desultory, superficial habit of mind, which is altogether unfriendly to the acquisition of solid and useful knowledge. Here, if I mistake not, is an evil of great magnitude. We are, at the present day, flooded with miscellany; overrun with light, fugitive publications; which so engage the time and attention of our people, that they have no leisure, and, in many cases, no disposition to read any thing else. Works of solid thought and substantial merit are disrelished, and thrown away as dry and uninteresting; while a constant, insatiable demand is made for what is light and superficial. Let every man who would not form the worst mental habits, and deprive himself of all real advantage from reading, guard most assiduously against this vicious taste. The evils of it, both to the heart and the intellect, are incalculable. It prevents *all deep moral feeling*, and all improvement in useful knowledge.

These remarks apply in all their force to the reading of novels. I will not take it upon me to say, that there is not, here and there, a single volume to be found in this class of

writings, which it may be safe and profitable to read. But where there is one of this character, there are hundreds and thousands of a directly opposite tendency; and to make a proper selection in the midst of so much trash and poison, is so difficult a matter, especially to young and inexperienced persons, that he acts wisest, in my opinion, who inscribes upon this whole class of books, *touch not*, *taste not*, *handle not*. This is not the place to go into a discussion of this subject. Let any man, however, examine it in the light of sober reason, and, I am persuaded, he will adopt the conclusion, that a very small portion of time should suffice for the reading of novels. Many of them are decidedly bad in their character; many more are useless and insipid; and even the best of them, I fear, are fraught with a mischief which is a full counterbalance to any good effects they may produce. I object to novels, not more on account of the immoral tendency of many of them, than on account of the pernicious effects they produce upon the intellect and taste of their readers. A mind, under the genuine influence of novel reading, shrinks from every task that requires close thought and patient attention. An insuperable aversion is created to all serious, solid reading, and a taste formed, which, while it rejects truth and reality, as dull and uninteresting, can be satisfied with nothing but the high-wrought creations of fiction. No habitual reader of novels can love the Bible, or love any other book that demands thought, or inculcates the serious duties of life. He dwells in a region of imagination, where he is disgusted with the plainness and simplicity of truth; with the sober realities which demand his attention, as an accountable subject of God's government. If, then, you would not worse than waste your time and talents; if you would not enfeeble your minds and impress on your hearts a light and frivolous character, and, by forming false views of life, prepare yourselves for disappointment and sorrow in the end, let the class of writings now under consideration, have but a very small portion of your attention. *The less the better.* No man, certainly, needs to be so burdened with life as to squander it away in poring over the dreams of fiction. Other and more serious matters demand our attention, and from the great number of useful books which abound at the present day, it surely cannot be difficult to make a selection

that will much more profitably occupy our leisure hours than those which call us away from the scenes of real life, to dwell in a region of chimeras.

Few authors can be read with more profit than those that illustrate the natural sciences, and show their application to the practical arts of life. Authors of this character teach us to read and understand the sublime volume of creation. They show us the admirable structure of nature; unfold to our view the beauty, order, and harmony, which characterize the works of God; and while in the study of these works, our minds are invigorated, our hearts improved, our views enlarged, and the sources of our enjoyment multiplied; we rise to a contemplation of the Great Being who created and governs all; and are thus taught to look through nature, up to nature's God. This is the natural tendency, and this the actual effect, in every pious mind, of studying the works of creation. Who can survey the wondrous volume which the Creator has spread out before us—who can contemplate the bright impress of his perfections as it is seen on the earth beneath; or read the shining lines of glory and of grandeur which are inscribed on the heavens above, without exclaiming with the devout psalmist, "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all; the earth is full of thy riches, and so is the great and wide sea."

Not less valuable are those writers that make us acquainted with our own minds and hearts; that analyze and lay open the secret springs of action; unfold the principles of political and moral science; illustrate the duties which we owe to our fellow-men, to society, and to God; and, by teaching us the nature, dignity, and end of our existence, aim to elevate our views and hopes, and lead us to aspire after the true glory and happiness of rational and immortal beings.

Our continuance on earth is but for a day. We are rapidly hastening through its busy scenes;—the sun of life will soon be set;—the darkness of death settle over all that here occupies our hearts and hands, and our immortal spirits pass into that world from whose bourne no traveller returns. What then is so important to us as a knowledge of ourselves, of our relation to God, and a future state, and the way in which we may be prepared for the scenes which

are so soon to open upon us in another world? Books that help us in the attainment of this knowledge are of inestimable value. They relate to our most important interests, and ought therefore to have the first place assigned them in a course of reading.

Especially *must this be said of the Bible.* This book, the "eldest surviving offspring of the human intellect," the chosen companion and friend of patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and of all the wisest and best men that have ever lived; —this book, that reveals to us the character and will of our great Creator and final Judge; that opens before us the way of salvation through a Redeemer; unveils to our view the invisible world, and shows us the final destiny of our race; —this book, which God has given expressly to teach us our character, our duty and prospects, which has conducted to heaven all who have entered that happy world, and must conduct us thither if ever we attain to its blessedness;— this book ought surely to be held by us in the highest place of honour and respect; to be made the guide of our youth, the companion of our age; our solace and support in all the prosperous and trying passages of life. Considered merely as a human composition, the Bible is unquestionably the most interesting book on earth. One of the greatest and best of men, I refer to Sir William Jones, a judge of the supreme court of judicature in Bengal, has said of the Bible,—"I have carefully and regularly perused the Scriptures, and am of opinion that this volume, independent of its divine origin, contains more sublimity, purer morality, more important history, and finer strains of eloquence, than can be collected from all other books, in whatever language they may have been written." Embrace this volume then, my friends, to your bosom. Let it be a lamp to your feet, and a light to your path. With every morning dawn and evening shade, repair to the book of God for instruction and counsel, and the happy effects of it upon your mind and heart, upon your character and life, upon your present and eternal happiness, you shall gratefully acknowledge at the right hand of your Judge, and amidst the thanksgivings and praises of the heavenly world.

Were I now to give you one rule for all, for regulating your choice of books, it should be this,—"Books are good or bad in their tendency, as they make you relish the word of God, the more or the less after you have read them."

## PART SECOND.

### RULES FOR READING.

THERE are many who read a great deal, and yet derive very little advantage from what they read. They make an injudicious choice of books; they read without method and without object, and often without attention and reflection. "They are delighted with the notions which they read or hear, as they would be with stories that are told; but they do not weigh them in their minds, as in a just balance, in order to determine their truth or falsehood; they make no observations upon them, or inferences from them. Perhaps their eyes slide over the pages, or the words slide over their ears, and vanish like a rhapsody of evening tales, or the shadows of a cloud flying over a green field in a summer's day. Or if they review them sufficiently to fix them in their remembrance, it is merely with a design to tell the tale over again, and show what men of learning they are. Thus they dream out their days in a course of reading, without real advantage. As a man may be eating all day, and for want of digestion receive no nourishment; so these endless readers may cram themselves with intellectual food, and without real improvement of their minds, for want of digesting it by reflection."* It is of great importance then, not only that we take heed *what* we read, but *how* we read.

1. In the first place, then, read with *discrimination*. The world is full of books; no small portion of which are either worthless, or decidedly hurtful in their tendency. And as no man has time to read every thing, he ought to make a selection of the ablest and best writers on the subjects which he wishes to investigate, and dismiss wholly from his attention the entire crowd of unworthy and useless ones. There is another reason for this. Bad books contain a secret and deadly poison; and if they are read indiscriminately, or without due caution, they are sure to corrupt the principles and destroy the soul. The young have great need to be guarded on this point. Many a youth has been destroyed by reading a single volume. You

* Watts' Improvement of the Mind, a very useful book for young persons.

ought, my friends, to be as careful what books you read, as what company you keep. Both exert a decided influence over your habits and character; and in making choice of either, you will, if you are wise, endeavour to obtain and follow good advice.

2. *Read with attention.* Never take up a book merely for amusement, or for the sake of whiling away time. Time thus spent is worse than lost. It tends to form a habit of desultory, indolent thought, and to incapacitate the mind for confining its attention to close and accurate investigation.

Always read with your attention fixed; with your thoughts concentrated, and your mind intently engaged on the subject you are pursuing. This will enable you to follow the argument and illustrations of your author; to comprehend his aim and object; "to distinguish truth from error; good sentiments from bad, and sound reasonings from mere conjectures and bold assertions." While this mode of reading will enlarge your views, and increase your stock of knowledge, it will also invigorate and strengthen your mind, and prepare you for higher and still more successful mental efforts.

3. *Read with reflection.* It is a good practice, when you take up a volume to read, first to cast your eye over the introduction, table of contents, and heads of argument; and having thus obtained a general view of your author's object, close the book, and inquire with yourself what you know on the subjects discussed, and how you would treat them if you were to attempt such an exercise. This will have a happy effect in forming your mind for original, independent thought, and at the same time it will prepare you to read the volume with greater interest, discrimination, and profit.

Especially is it important as you proceed, often to pause and reflect upon what you have read. Recall the train of thought, examine the arguments, inquire as to the object and aim of your author; whether his reasonings are conclusive, his sentiments just, his illustrations pertinent, and his spirit good. To read in this manner is indeed laborious; and he who pursues it will be able to read but few volumes, in comparison with him who *skims* over every book that is thrown in his way. But the amount of knowledge and vigour of mind acquired in this way are an

abundant compensation for any deficiency in the number of authors read.

One book read thoroughly, and with careful reflection, will do more to improve the mind and enrich the understanding than skimming over the surface of a whole library. Indeed, the more one reads in this hasty, superficial manner, the worse. It is like loading the stomach with a great quantity of food, which lies there undigested. It enfeebles the intellect, and sheds darkness and confusion over all the operations of the mind.

4. *Read with confidence.* It is often said man does not know his weakness. It is quite as true, he does not know his strength. Multitudes fail to accomplish what they might, because they have not due confidence in their powers, and do not know what they are capable of accomplishing. Hence they yield their understandings to the dictation of others, and never think or act for themselves. The only use they make of reading, is to remember and repeat the sentiments of their author. This is an error. When you sit down to the reading of a book, believe that you are able to understand the subject on which it treats, and resolve that you will understand it. If it calls you to a severe effort, so much the better. The mind, like the body, is strengthened by exercise; and the severer the exercise, the greater the increase of strength. One hour of thorough, close application to study, does more to invigorate and improve the mind, than a week spent in the ordinary exercise of its powers. Call no man master. Yield not your minds to the passive impressions which others may please to make upon them. Hear what they have to say; examine it; weigh it; and then judge for yourselves. This will enable you to make a right use of books,—to use them as *helpers*, not as *guides* to your understanding, as *counsellors*, not as *dictators* of what you are to think and believe.

5. At the same time read with *humility and candour.* We know so little in comparison with what is to be known, that we have always much more reason to be humbled by our ignorance, than puffed up by our knowledge. Real science is ever humble and docile; but pedantry is proud and self-conceited. Men of deep research and extensive knowledge are much more apt to be candid and teachable, than your mere smatterers in knowledge. Persons who

read much and think little, are greatly exposed to be puffed up with pride and self-conceit, because they estimate their knowledge more by the number of books they have read, than by the clear and well-defined ideas they have collected from them. Hence the poet's advice is both true and important.

> A little learning is a dangerous thing:
> Drink deep or taste not the Pierean spring:
> There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,
> And drinking largely sobers us again.

He who would read profitably must read with an humble and teachable mind, and be ready to embrace truth, wherever it is found, or by whomsoever it is taught, whether by friend or foe. It is the mark of a shallow, prejudiced mind, to reject every thing as false because it does not agree with its own prepossessions, and to embrace every thing because it does.

> Seize upon truth where'er 'tis found,
> Amongst your friends, amongst your foes,
> On Christian or on heathen ground;
> The flower's divine where'er it grows;
> Neglect the prickle and assume the rose.

6. It is a happy method to improve by reading, when several persons unite in reading the same book, or on the same subject, and meet occasionally to interchange their thoughts, and compare their opinions respecting the authors they have been studying. The effect of this is to produce a thorough knowledge of the books you read; to impress the instruction derived from them more deeply on your mind; to give clearness and precision to your thoughts; to improve the talent of conversation, and form you to a habit of readily communicating your ideas when called to take a part in any subject of inquiry or debate.

7. *Read for improvement, and not for show.*—Recollect that the great object of reading is not to be able to tell what others have thought and said; but to improve your minds in useful knowledge, establish your hearts in virtue, and prepare yourselves for a right performance of the duties of life, and for a joyful acceptance with God on the great day of account. This is the grand object we should always keep in view in all our endeavours to acquire know-

ledge, whether by books or other means of improvement. It is the object for which we were made ; and no reading, no study, no pursuits of life are to be accounted right and useful any further than they tend to assist us in the attainment of this great end of our being. If we felt this as we ought, it would be to us instead of all other rules on the subject before us. It would lead us to a proper choice of books, to a profitable manner of reading them, to a right use of our knowledge, and in all our endeavours to improve our minds, to imitate the example set us by the wisest of men,—to seek from God a *wise and understanding heart*, that all our attainments might thus be laid at the foot of the cross, and consecrated to the service of him who died for us and rose again.

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## PART THIRD.

### NOVEL READING.

It is certain that Christianity must look with disapprobation upon much that passes in the world under the name of fiction. The drama deals in fiction, and in incidents embellished by the imagination. But the novel and romance are less injurious, not because the imagination is not put into equal exercise, but purely from adventitious circumstances. The object of the novelist is to throw over life deceitful colours—to heighten enjoyments which the world possesses not—to absorb the attention in the destinies of imaginary characters—to give alluring traits to men of suspicious principles—to paint the respective qualities of heroes and heroines, and develope a train of incidents founded in falsehood. Old age, that ought to be gathering additional tranquillity for its last earthly hour, is warmed into a remembrance, though not a penitent remembrance, of youthful follies. The thoughtless and inexperienced are pushed on into romantic extravagance. The holy Sabbath and the midnight hour are frequently devoted to the perusal, and of course to the composition of novels. The bell that calls thousands to places of worship, where the wellsprings of life are opened, has not power to charm away those who are engrossed with a tale of imaginary distress. The positive duties, and the diversified relations

of life, are undervalued. High mental accomplishments are cheerfully sacrificed to the impulse of a feverish curiosity, that aspires to nothing loftier than to know the winding up of scenes that a restive fancy has created.

But with regard to the numerous productions of this class, which are current in the world, there is little disagreement in opinion. Their warmest admirers admit their injurious tendency. There are some, however, whose incidents and characters are chiefly historical, that call for more serious consideration. We approach again a distinguished writer in this field of the imagination, which he has cultivated with assiduous care. It is hard, indeed, to read these compositions, be charmed with them, and then not speak of them affectionately. When we consider, too, that the labours of this writer have been highly useful in stopping the voluptuous demand for commonplace fictions, by the marked superiority of his own, we feel no common respect for talents so exalted, a genius so fruitful in resources, for descriptive powers so unrivalled. It would be no daring achievement to hunt down the soft sentimentalism of our every-day writers, but when we wind our feeble horn amidst some distant forest, say the forest of Ettrick, we feel the antiquity of its shades, the novelty of the scene, and a conscious ignorance whither to direct our steps. But the standard of religion laid down by this writer, is a standard always false or insufficient. Born in a country blessed with the light of the reformation, nurtured amidst ecclesiastical connexions which have been a signal blessing to Scotland, which have crowned her mountains with churches and filled her vales with faithful pastors, we should have expected from him a more accurate discrimination between truth and error.

He has thrown around a Jewess the charm of inflexible constancy in a false system of religion—false, as rejecting Christianity, but, in connexion with it, a glorious system of truth. He has chilled every moral feeling in his description of the reformed preachers. He has rent the Scriptures to pieces, and scattered them far and wide over the pages of romance. He has taken the name of the Lord his God in vain, and the Lord will not hold him guiltless. He has attempted to portray piety, but it is a piety weak, credulous, and ridiculous. He has left on the mind of his reader an improper view of the rigour of Knox, to whom

Scotland is more indebted than to all her regal line. He has almost placed the ruins of abbeys and monasteries in a scale against the blessings of the reformation. As well might we take up a lamentation over the destruction of feudal castles, when the liberties of thousands have been established on their ruins, or over Indian fortifications in our own country, when millions are spreading themselves over the face of our happy land, rich in the blessings of freedom, literature, and religion.

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## A LETTER ON NOVEL READING, FROM REV. HEMAN HUMPHREY, D.D.

But what do you think of novels and other kindred works of fiction, where the language is chaste, the sentiments unexceptionable, and the moral good? Shall they be brought into the domestic circle, or excluded from it? A full answer to this question would require much more time than I can at present devote to it. Absolutely to proscribe *all* fiction, would, perhaps, be going too far. I think I could select a dozen volumes, besides Robinson Crusoe, which I should be willing to have my children read in their minority. But nothing is more to be deprecated, in a family, than a morbid appetite for novels; and all experience proves, how difficult it is to keep it from becoming absolutely *ravenous*, if it is indulged at all. Reading one work of fiction is almost certain to create in the young and susceptible mind a more eager demand for another; and the demand rises at every step of the progress, till it is prepared to break over all bounds, and to devour whatever comes in its way, however it may inflame the passions, pollute the imagination, or corrupt the heart. There is a striking resemblance, in this respect, between the novel reader and the dram drinker. Both are sure that a little does them good, and that they can refrain whenever they please. The appetite of both is sharpened by indulgence till they lose all self-control, and are completely at the mercy of its insatiableness. As the drunkard will contrive to get the means of intoxication in spite of every friendly remonstrance and precaution, so the young and prurient novel reader, will beg or borrow clandestinely, when the books cannot otherwise be obtained. The only perfectly safe course, in either case

is, "touch not, taste not, handle not." One grand objection against putting popular works of fiction into the hands of our youth of both sexes is, that the world of romance, differs so entirely from the rough, stormy, and matter-of-fact world in which they are to live and be *happy*, if they can; and certainly to suffer, whatever pains they may take to shun it. Suppose your blooming daughter, of fifteen, could be transported into some paradise of perpetual spring and spicy breezes—of odoriferous flowers, and feathered harmony, and gushing marble fountains, and banyan shades, and everlasting sunshine—what kind of preparation would she be making, in such bowers of unmingled delights, for returning, at the end of five or ten years, to spend her life in this cold region where she was born, upon which the curse of God has so heavily fallen? But far worse than this must it be for her to dwell for the same number of years in the fairy lands of romance, and then come down to the dull, husky prose and discordant elements—the thousand inconveniences, and cares, and toils, and disappointments of real life. When the novelist can plant, and water, and illuminate some terrestrial paradise; and shut out pain, and sorrow, and sin; and give our children a life lease of it, it will be time enough to introduce them to his acquaintance; but, till then, the less they have to do with this class of writers the better.

I proceed next to offer a few thoughts upon the *religious* fiction of the day. Is it a safe and profitable kind of reading? Who does not know that books of this class have been greatly multiplied within the last five-and-twenty years: and it is easily accounted for. The number of religious families in our country has very much increased; and this hath proportionally increased the demand for religious reading. Popular writers, always awake to the fluctuations of public taste, have met the demand, by mingling fictitious amusement, for the younger branches of such families, with religious phraseology and religious instruction. Of these writers, there are two classes; those that give a religious cast to their books, to make them *sell*, and those truly pious authors, whose aim it is, by the aid of interesting fiction, to allure their young readers to the love and practice of religion.

The first of these classes commonly make extremely awkward work of it. Having no religion themselves, and

never having read the Bible with any serious attention, they know not what to do with it. A certain number of theological terms and phrases must be introduced into every chapter; but where to bring them in, they seem to be about as much at a loss, as a good man would be, when to swear, and when to let it alone. Hence their religious novels, written for the special edification of our children, because we object to the oldfashioned class of romances, often present such grotesque specimens of patch-work, as are rarely to be met with in any other writings. "The apples of gold" are set in any thing but "pictures of silver." The quotations from Scripture are hardly ever apposite; and often, when they think they have rounded off a period most piously, it is difficult to acquit them of taking the name of God in vain. Whenever they *lug* in the doctrines of the Bible, the views which they present are sure to be extremely crude, if not palpably and grossly erroneous. Let parents, then, beware of this whole class of misnamed *religious* novels. They are more dangerous in a rising family than almost any others.

The second class, I mean those that are written by pious authors, and are both theologically and evangelically correct, it is not so easy to dispose of. I should not dare to say that they have done no good; and were it possible, in practice, to draw the line between them and the least exceptionable of the first class, and at the same time to prevent their being too much multiplied, I should hail them as valuable auxiliaries in Christian education. But here lies the grand difficulty. If you put fiction, which is really religious, into the hands of your children, they will be extremely apt to extend their reading to that which is so only in *name*, and to prefer it as more congenial to the native depravity of the human heart. "What book is that, my son, which you are reading with so much interest to-day?" "It is a religious novel." You look at the title and shake your head. "Where did you borrow it? I had rather you would not read it, especially on the Sabbath." "But, father, it is certainly a *religious* book, for it is just like my last New Year's present, which you said was written by one of the most pious ladies in England." Now *you* may see a heaven-wide difference between the two, but your child does not; and though you may persuade or command him to break off in the midst of a story, he will be exceed-

ingly apt to take it up again as soon as your back is turned. Our unconverted children will not discriminate. We cannot expect it. And if we countenance religious novel reading at all, the danger is, that the more tares and chaff there are in the wheat, the better they will like it.

And even if there was no false theology mingled with fiction, the question would arise in the mind of every pious and intelligent parent, how far he ought to encourage such reading in his family. If it be found by experience that it is the well-told *story* and nothing else, which rivets the attention of the child—that the *fiction* of the book is all in all with him, and the religion goes for nothing; or if while his appetite is sharpened for this kind of aliment he has less and less relish for the Bible and for all other religious reading which does not come recommended by the charms of fictitious narrative, then the query may well arise, whether it is not a duty to exclude this latter class of books altogether? Even gold may be bought too dear, especially where there is a very large portion of alloy. It is not enough for a Christian father to be satisfied that the books which he is advised to put into the hands of his children are of a decidedly moral and religious tendency. He is bound to ask another question; "Will they, upon the whole, do more harm than good, by creating and pampering a vicious taste for highly-seasoned condiments? Will they displace the Bible and usurp the place of all other solid religious reading?"

For my own part, I have come gradually and I may say reluctantly to the conclusion, that most of the religious reading in our families is unprofitable, if not in the long run absolutely injurious to our children. It is not calculated to make them thinking, intelligent, and full-grown Christians, but to keep them always in a sort of excitable, dwarfish, and fitful minority. In this remark I include the thousand religious story books designed for the nursery, with which the land is flooded, as well as fictitious works of higher pretensions. I hope the reader will not misunderstand me: I do not object altogether to religious story books, infant biography and the like. Not a few of these little 18 and 24mos are very instructive, as well as interesting. But we have too many of them—altogether too many in our nurseries, in our children's closets, and in our Sabbath-school libraries. Our babes have too much milk and they are kept

too long upon it. They ought to have more meat. Certain it is, that from some cause or other, young Christians of full stature and intellectual maturity, do not now take up solid practical and doctrinal religious reading, with any thing like that zest which young disciples of their age did, one third of a century ago; and I ascribe the difference mainly to the multiplication of books of that class which I have just mentioned. It is so delightful to run over volume after volume, borne on by the mere current of *feeling*, that *thinking* becomes irksome; and when our sons and daughters should be reading Howe, and Baxter, and Witherspoon, and Dwight, and Robert Hall, and Jonathan Edwards, they are still poring over the last religious annual or story book.

And what confirms me still more in the opinion which I have ventured to express, respecting the Lilliputian tendency of light and fictitious religious reading is, that even many fathers and mothers in our Israel, who were brought up on the substantial aliment of the old Puritans, are now regaling themselves with the condiments of the nursery, instead of adhering to the meat which they were once so fond of, and in the strength of it, "going on unto perfection." Of those, also, who still retain their fondness for the old standard religious authors, how many now prefer the most summary abridgments and compends, to the thick quarto and heavy octavos, which they used to sit and ponder over, hour after hour, upon the Sabbath, and by the quiet evening fireside.

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## PART FOURTH.

### A LETTER FROM THE HON. JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, EX-PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

*Washington, 22d June*, 1838.

GENTLEMEN:—I have no words to express my gratitude for the kind feeling and more than friendly estimate of my character contained in your letter of the 9th inst., and am not less at a loss for language to utter the humiliation of a deep conviction how little your panegyric has been deserved.

Were it even so far deserved that I could feel myself qualified to give you the advice which you desire, it would

afford me the most heartfelt pleasure to give it; but situated in life as you represent yourselves to be, I could scarcely name any list of books, or of authors, which I could recommend as equally worthy of attention to you all. The first, and almost the only book deserving such universal recommendation, is the BIBLE—and in recommending that, I fear that some of you will think I am performing a superfluous, and others, a very unnecessary office—yet such is my deliberate opinion. The Bible is the book of all others to be read at all ages and in all conditions of human life; not to be read once or twice or thrice through, and then to be laid aside; but to be read in small portions of one or two chapters every day, and never to be intermitted, unless by some overruling necessity.

This attentive and repeated reading of the Bible in small portions every day, leads the mind to habitual meditation upon subjects of the highest interest to the welfare of the individual in this world, as well as to prepare him for that hereafter to which we are all destined. It furnishes rules of conduct for our own conduct towards others in our social relation. In the commandments delivered from Sinai, in the inimitable sublimity of the Psalms and of the prophets, in the profound and concentrated observations upon human life and manners imbodied in the Proverbs of Solomon, in the philosophical allegory so beautifully set forth in the narrative of facts, whether real or imaginary, of the Book of Job, an active mind cannot peruse a single chapter and lay the book aside to think, and take it up again to-morrow, without finding in it advice for our own conduct, which we may turn to useful account, in the progress of our daily pilgrimage upon earth—and when we pass from the Old Testament to the New, we meet at once a system of universal morality founded upon one precept of universal application, pointing us to peace and good-will towards the whole race of man for this life, and to peace with God and an ever-blessed existence hereafter.

My friends, if all or any of you have spiritual pastors to guide you in the paths of salvation, do not imagine that I am encroaching upon the field of their appropriate services;—I speak as a man of the world to men of the world; and I say to you, search the Scriptures! If ever you tire of them in seeking for a rule of faith and a standard of morals, search them as records of history. General and

compendious history is one of the fountains of human knowledge to which you should all resort with steady and persevering pursuit. The Bible contains the only authentic introduction to the history of the world; and in storing your minds with the facts of this history, you will immediately perceive the need of assistance from geography and chronology. These assistances you may find in many of the Bibles published with commentaries, and you can have no difficulty in procuring them. Acquaint yourselves with the chronology and geography of the Bible—that will lead you to a general knowledge of chronology and of geography, ancient and modern, and these will open to you an inexhaustible fountain of knowledge, respecting the globe which you inhabit, and respecting the race of man, its inhabitant, to which you yourselves belong. You may pursue these inquiries just so far as your time and inclination will permit. Give one hour of mental application; for you must not read without thinking, or you will read to little purpose—give an hour of joint reading and thought to the chronology, and one to the geography of the Bible, and if it introduces you to too hard a study, stop there. Even for these two hours, you will ever after read the Bible, and any other history, with more fruit, more intelligence, more satisfaction. But if those two hours excite your curiosity, and tempt you to devote part of an hour every day for a year or years, to study thoroughly the chronology and geography of the Bible, it will not only lead you far deeper than you will otherwise ever penetrate into the knowledge of the book, but it will spread floods of light upon every step you shall ever afterwards take in acquiring the knowledge of profane history, and upon the local habitation of every tribe of man, and upon the name of every nation into which the children of Adam have been divided.

There are many other subsidiary studies, to which you may devote more or less of time, for the express purpose of making your Bible reading more intelligible to yourselves. It is a book which neither the most ignorant and weakest, nor the most learned and intelligent mind can read without improvement.

There are other books of great worth and of easy acquisition, which I suppose will be accessible to you all. The Libraries of Useful and of Entertaining Knowledge—the Family Library, the Monthly and Quarterly Reviews, and

Magazines, which are in a continual succession of publication in this country as well as in England, will furnish you a constant supply of profitable reading: for the selection of which, time, inclination, and opportunity will be your wisest counsellors. As citizens of a free country, taking an interest in its public concerns, I am sure I need not remind you, how strong your impulse should be to seek an intimate knowledge of the history of America, from the voyage of Columbus, and even of his supposed predecessors, Prince Madoc of Wales and the Northmen, down to the Olympiads of Andrew Jackson and Martin Van Buren. The American Hemisphere—the continent of North America—the United States of America before and since the acquisition of Louisiana, and every separate state of this Union, is a series of historical problems of which you should systematically seek the solution. Read the Constitution of the United States—the Commentary of the Federalists—the Constitution and History of your own State—biographies, beginning with Langhorne's Plutarch, and thence proceeding to the history of John Smith; to the American biographies of Belknap and Sparks; to Washington Irving's Life of Columbus; and to the articles of Penn, and Calvert, and Locke, and Oglethorpe, which will lead you on to others, in the Encyclopædia Americana or Conversations Lexicon. Then the fashionable novels and poetry of the present times: Scott, Byron, Moore, Rogers, Coleridge, Southey, Wordsworth, two Montgomerys, Cooper, Paulding, Willis, Mrs. Hemans and Lady Blessington, Mrs. Sigourney and Miss Gould, and, worth them all, Miss Edgeworth; and, lastly, the reports of your countrymen, travellers in foreign lands—Dr. Dwight, Dr. Sprague, Mr. Bigelow, Lieut. Slidell, and Dr. Fisk; with many others whose names do not at this moment occur to me.—But I have given you more than enough, and, after all, hardly know whether the catalogue will meet your inquiries, or satisfy your expectations. After all, I must conclude with the advice of the serving man to the young student of——— in Shakspeare——"Study what you most affect."

I remain your friend and fellow-student for life,

J. Q. Adams.

# No. V.

## MENTAL AND MORAL CULTURE COMBINED, THE ONLY TRUE BASIS OF EDUCATION.

BY MARCUS E. CROSS.

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### PART FIRST.

It must be admitted that the legitimate tendency of sound knowledge is in unison with the promotion of *good morals*. The illumined understanding gives light to the conscience. The genius, once fired by the contemplation of man's duties and powers, and of his Maker's wisdom, will warm and invigorate the affections and the heart. The difficulties and doubts that overcloud our best knowledge, show us our weakness, and teach us humility. Still, the precious gift of knowledge is liable to a wicked perversion; and the greatness of the evils that may arise from such perversion, is commensurate with the unspeakable value of the blessing. Mathematical and physical science may assist in preparing and brandishing the weapons of sophistry and skepticism, wherewith to wither the dearest hopes and consolations of man. The imagination and fancy, cultivated by taste, and enriched with the gems of various learning, may impart vigour and keenness to the vilest lusts; so that like the foul sorceress, described by Milton as keeping hell's adamantine gates, while it rears its goodly front towards the skies, beaming with seductive beauty, it at the same time winds its poisonous length in many a scaly fold, far along upon the earth;

> "——— a serpent armed
> With mortal sting."*

While we admit the soundness of the maxim, "Knowledge is power," for producing beneficial results, we at the

* Paradise Lost, book ii. line 652.

same time affirm, that it is also power for *evil*, as well as for *good*, and when entirely disconnected with the regulating influence of moral principle, it is a most dangerous engine. And we think we are not mistaken when we say, that the great error of some highly distinguished and benevolent men of the age, is to lose sight of the necessity of a close bond of union between *moral* and *mental culture*. They seem to take it for granted that men are as much inclined to good as to evil; and that if the stream of knowledge only flows broad and deep through the land, it will, as it runs, work out every moral and political evil.

> "——— and as it runs refine,
> Till by degrees the floating mirror shine;
> Reflect the flowers that on its border grow,
> And heaven's own light in its fair bosom show."

One of the distinguished advocates of the efficacy of simple knowledge is Henry Brougham, who stands as a legal advocate at the head of the English bar. Pre-eminent as a man of science, a literary man, a statesman, lawyer, and orator, he is the leader of a party in the English Parliament, which imbodies the strength and sinew of the enlightened and patriotic in England, the hope and confidence of the *world*. We award cheerfully to him and to his party the meed of distinguished philanthropy and patriotism. But in his published articles on practical education, he evinces his sole reliance for the security of the government, on the general diffusion of knowledge. And it is because sentiments like his find a response in great numbers, who are engaged with commendable zeal in the cause of education, that we are induced to undertake to expose this *fundamental* and *fatal* error in education; and without abating an *iota* from the importance of knowledge, to show the necessity of combining *moral* and *religious* with *intellectual* culture, if we would secure the happiest results in *education*.

The sentiments of Mr. Brougham, as expressed in the Edinburgh Review, are stated in the following paragraph:

"Unshackle the press, multiply the means of knowledge, and pour the stream of science and political information through the land, and the country is safe. Give but the means of information to the people, and they will approve and maintain the right."

Such sentiments, without the least recognition of the only moral antidote of sufficient moral power to correct the evil tendencies, and the deep and wayward perversities of human character; a system of education, entirely destitute of any corrective for the maladies of the human heart, we conceive to be an error of fearful magnitude, and one of the ominous features of the age.

In order to show that mere knowledge, unaccompanied by correct moral influence, can never prove the conservative principle of society; let us deduce in the first place some arguments from history, and, secondly, contemplate the light which reason throws upon this subject.

I. Few countries have ever been more distinguished for knowledge than Greece. A brighter period scarcely ever relieved the dark pages of history in the annals of the human mind. Grecian literature and Grecian art need no eulogist. Their praises are inscribed on the monuments they reared, more enduring than brass. By the united suffrages of the world, her orators, poets, and artists have become the standard oracles of *classic beauty*. Nor let it be said, that it was only the choice few who were instructed; for the populace, the mass of the people, were learned. They repaired to the groves of Academus, to hang with delight on the lips of their revered instructer, Plato. They drank at the fountains of Castalia, and they ascended the verdant mountains of Parnassus. The facts of their history, the achievements of their heroes, the glories of their ancestors, were all treasured up in their memories in the enduring forms of eloquence and poetry. The poems of Homer, and Euripides, and Pindar were inscribed on the living tablets of *Grecian mind*. Yet, with all her knowledge, the glorious light of Greece was long since extinct, and tyrants have ruled her with an iron *despotism*. Greece, the land of intellect, and genius, and thought, and learning, lives only in the memory of the past. Where is her splendour, her glory, her mighty fleets and invincible armies? where her spirit-stirring orators? her victorious generals? Where shall we find her Demosthenes, her Cimon, and Epaminondas? Alas! all these are gone. Her glory has departed. From the highest pinnacle of her glory she has fallen, and we date her decline from the era of her brightest intellectual development. The age of Pericles is at once her *highest* glory and her deepest disgrace. All her know-

ledge and refinement, her science, art, genius, taste, intelligence, could not save her. The fruit of the tree of knowledge was too stimulating. She had no element of sufficient moral power to control and guide the excited energies of her awakened intellect. She needed the fruit of the tree of life, mixed with the tree of knowledge.

Let us now turn our attention for a moment to an example in modern times; I allude to France during the last century. The brightest era in the history of the French mind commenced with the reign of Louis XVI. A race of learned men and philosophers then arose, who, for native talent, genius, and metaphysical subtility, will challenge comparison with those of any other age or nation. Ceres, in the fable, who lighted her torch at the fires of Ætna, and mounted her chariot drawn by dragons, never pursued her daughter Proserpine with greater keenness of inquiry than did these philosophers the ideal of perfection in knowledge. They were literally worshippers of Minerva, the goddess of *wisdom*. Their aim was to advance science for *its own sake*, and to diffuse knowledge universally among the people. They aimed to send forth gushing streams of knowledge from the wells at which they themselves had drank, over the whole face of society. Their conception was magnificent: their vision glorious. In the selection of their means, they evinced consummate wisdom. Multitudes of powerful minds devoted their attention to the composition of books, treatises, essays and tracts, to circulate in the community. All France became one great school of philosophy. The broad and deep ocean of mind was moved. For a while, the philosophers rode proudly like Tritons, the retinue of Neptune, amid the waves they had excited. But they had forgotten to provide the only trident of sufficient power, which could *allay* the storm and waves they had *excited*. When they cut loose from all the restraints of conscience and moral obligation, and religion; when they had declared death an eternal sleep, abrogated the Sabbath, denied the distinction between right and wrong, and declared the goddess Reason whom they had crowned and placed upon the throne, the only divinity,* they found

* *Consecration of the Goddess Reason.*—Surrounded by the crowd was a young woman, (Madame Desmoulines) of the finest figure arrayed in the robes of Liberty, and seated in a chair ornamented with leaves and festoons. She was placed opposite the president; and Chau-

the spirits they had raised would not down at their bidding. They had put the two-edged sword of knowledge into the hands of maniacs, from whose minds was obliterated every sentiment of virtue, every idea of accountability to a Supreme Being. Why then, we may demand, was it thus? Why was refined, philosophic Paris, converted as it were into a den of assassins? Why were her streets crowded with scaffolds raining blood on the gloomy processions of death passing beneath them? Why her government shaken to its very centre, and even reduced to its original elements? It was not on account of ignorance. It was not an unreading, unthinking populace, that perpetrated horrors that might make the sun in heaven hide his head, and that made every man tremble at the touch of his fellow, lest the next moment a dagger should be plunged into his bosom. No, no! It was the intelligent, clear-headed infidels, who excited these commotions, and perpetrated these tragic deeds. It

mette one of the members said, *Fanaticism* has abandoned the place of truth. Squint-eyed it could not bear the brilliant light. The people of Paris have taken possession of the temple which they have regenerated; the Gothic arches which till this day resounded with *lies*, now echo with the accents of truth; you see we have not taken for our festivals inanimate idols, it is a chef d'œuvre of nature whom we have arrayed in the habit of Liberty; its sacred form has inflamed all hearts. The public has but one cry, "No more altars, no more priests, no other God but nature." The goddess then seated herself beside the president, who gave her a fraternal kiss. The secretaries presented themselves to share the same favour. Every one was eager to kiss the new divinity, whom so many solicitations did not in the least disconcert. During the ceremony, the orphans of the country, (pupils of Bourdon, one of the members,) sang a hymn to Reason in her new temple. A grand festival was accordingly held in the church of Notre Dame in honour of this deity. In the middle of the church was erected a mount, and on it a very plain temple, the façade of which bore the following inscription—"a la Philosophie." The torch of truth was in the summit of the mount upon the altar of Reason, spreading light. Two rows of young girls dressed in white, each wearing a crown of oak leaves, crossed before the altar of reason at the sound of republican music; each of the girls inclined before the torch, and ascended the summit of the mount. Liberty then came out of the temple of philosophy towards a throne made of turf, to receive the homage of the republicans of both sexes, who sang a hymn in her praise, extending their arms at the same time towards her. *Liberty* ascended afterwards to return to the temple, and in re-entering it, she turned about, casting a look of benevolence upon her friends: when she got in, every one expressed with enthusiasm the sensations which the goddess excited in them, by songs of joy; and they swore never, never to cease to be faithful to her.

was *unbaptized science*, under no *moral restraints*, and only subjected to the appliances of *atheism* and *infidelity*, that caused those guillotines to be *erected*—those daggers to be *drawn*, and those torrents of blood to *flow*. They had *severed* the bond of union between moral and intellectual culture, the *only* bond that can give stability to character. The Bible, and its redeeming influence, was divorced from the *French mind*. The idea of any *divine influence* on the heart, or in fact, the *necessity* of any, was *scouted* from the land as a *dream* of enthusiasts. They were acting on a false and fatal principle in *education*. They were leaving the highest element of man's nature untouched, unprovided for, *uneducated*.

Such being their system of education, the results of the French Revolution are not surprising; but, on the contrary, are the legitimate effects of the system. The man who believes there is no God to whom he is accountable,—no future state in which he is to exist, no relationship subsisting between himself and any other being, that involves obligation; has the strongest motives that can be imagined, to yield himself up to the most unbridled licentiousness; and his strength and vigour of mind only urge him on with a power *proportioned* to the greatness of his mental resources. Having nothing to *hope* for on the one hand and professedly *fearing* nothing on the other;—at any rate believing that the condition of the *future* is to be in no way influenced by the doings of the *present*; what is there to keep him from coming under the complete dominion of his *animal* nature, and yielding to the promptings of every passion that would bring him down to a level with the brutes?

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## PART SECOND.

What now is the nature of the light which reason throws upon this subject?

All sound philosophy recognises a threefold *distinction* in human nature; the *physical*, the *intellectual*, and the *moral*. Education, properly so called, consists in the development and exercise of all these parts of the man,

in their due proportions and *degrees*. It includes all those influences and disciplines by which his faculties are unfolded and perfected. The right kind of education is a *symmetrical* education. Where some of the powers are cultivated to the neglect of the others, the result is *intellectual disproportion*, and the proper balance of the mind is destroyed. *Education*, then, is that agency, which takes the helpless pleading infant from the hands of its *Creator;* and apprehending its entire nature, fully appreciating the threefold distinction which we have noticed, tempts it forth,—by kindly *influences* seeks to *draw forth all* its powers, and to build up an efficient character. We shall not stop here to adduce any arguments in favour of a proper discipline and exercise of the *physical* powers; because all are agreed on its importance. All agree in the importance of the maxim, "mens sana in sano corpore." We shall proceed to show, that the best way to cultivate the *intellectual* powers is to preserve an indissoluble connexion between *intellectual* and *moral culture*. The way to realize blessed results in education, to perpetuate the morals of the land, and to make useful citizens, is to begin with the first dawnings of intelligence, to watch with as sleepless vigilance as did the Grecians the Delphic oracle, the moral powers. Reason demands that all the powers of the mind should receive attention *proportionately* to their dignity and worth. What is the grand *distinction* between a man and a brute? It is the *moral*, spiritual, and *immortal nature*. The *moral faculty*, the *conscience*, the *reason*, are the prerogatives of man; Heaven's seal on his dignity; the patent of his nobility; the image of his Maker, wherewith he was stamped and sealed as the heir of immortality. Man was first created in the true image of Jehovah,—next in rank and degree to the angelic multitude that cast their crowns before the effulgent throne of the Eternal. His *moral sense* was then pure and uncontaminated by any evil influence. His disposition then prompted him to discharge his duties from an *internal* relish of the laws of *divine order*. He *shunned evil* because his eyes were opened to the inexpressible beauty and loveliness of *truth;* and *did good*, because it *was good*, and congenial with the best and purest dictates of his *nature*.

But man, in relation to his moral powers, is not now what he was in his pristine dignity. A change has come

over his character. Sin has defiled his heart and perverted his moral powers. The gold has become dim. The crown of his primeval dignity has fallen. This moral being is in *ruins*. *Self-love* now reigns supreme in his heart, the principle that bears the deadly fruit of hatred towards God and man, with its train of evil passions, destructive of social order. And yet the soul, *polluted* as it is, and the moral faculty, *perverted* as it is, still remains, a jewel of unspeakable value, though it is now encrusted only with sin.

Now what should we naturally suppose would be the effect of directing *exclusive* attention to the mind, to make use of every appliance to excite its vigour and expand its power, without applying any corrective process to the heart and moral powers? The inevitable consequence would be an increasing power to do evil, with a disposition more and more alienated against all that is good. Every passion would be *stimulated*, every evil propensity *quickened*,—the character would be likely to assume the darkest shades of selfishness. The fires of genius would be kindled only to *destroy*. Ingenuity would become but the wily craft of the serpent. The merely *intellectual* man, whose *moral* nature is dormant or *dead*, is a *monster*, and not a *man*. He has no sympathies with humanity; no sentiment of virtue inhabits his breast; no music of tender affections touches his soul. Burke, a profound master of the human mind, has said, with his usual felicity of expression, "Nothing can be conceived more hard than the heart of a thorough-bred metaphysician. It comes nearer to the cold malignity of a wicked spirit, than to the frailty and passion of a man." The mind and the heart are, in fact, independent and distinct faculties of man; *each* demands its *peculiar* culture. The neglect to furnish food, aliment, and appropriate training to the *moral powers*, leaves one whole department of the human soul untouched and unprovided for. It is like undertaking to purify the *streams*, while we are throwing poison into the *fountain;* or a pruning of the branches while we neglect the *roots*.

An examination of our penitentiaries and the whole catalogue of crime confirms the truth of our position, that great *mental activity*, without moral training, is baneful. Are there none there but the ignorant, the uninformed, the stupid? Alas! the reverse of this is the picture. How often is the reluctant tribute of admiration extorted from

the visitor as he gazes on the intelligent countenances, keen eyes, and imposing presence of these *caged tigers!* How often does the suspicion arise in the admirer of genius whether *virtue* be indeed *favourable* to the highest development of mind; whether its proud aspirings, its eagle flights, with unblenching eye, its bold excursions, be not *repressed* by the timid prudence of virtue? Who has not gazed with a kind of admiration on a Byron perched in proud scorn on the highest pinnacle of the mount of song; —or a Napoleon, great and sublime, in the power of conceiving *bold and extensive plans;* of bringing to bear on a mighty object a complicated machinery of means and energies to produce great results; a man who, by the single might of his genius, raised himself from obscurity; who sent the terror of his name across seas and oceans; who broke down the mighty barrier of the Alps, and made them a highway; and whose fame was spread beyond the boundaries of *civilization*, to the *steppes* of the *Cossack* and the *deserts* of the *Arab;*—though he knew that the *former* (Byron) had scattered mildew from his wings, and flung perdition all around him; and the *latter* (Napoleon) sacrified on the altar of his ambition more than a million of his race?

The mind needs moral culture in order that it may *appreciate* the *beauties* and *glories* of *nature.* Men may talk of the *all-pervading presence* of *beauty*, and urge us to *cultivate a taste* for it. And we agree with them fully in the importance of the subject. We admit with them that *beauty* unfolds in the numberless flowers of spring—that it waves in the branches of the trees, and the green blades of grass—that it haunts the depths of the earth and seas, and gleams out in the hues of the shell and precious stone—that the ocean, the mountains, the clouds, the heavens, the stars, the rising and setting sun *overflow* with beauty. The universe entire is its temple. But how is the true taste for appreciating this beauty to be secured? Doubtless the germ of this taste is implanted to a greater or less extent in the breast of every human being; and it is a power which admits of *cultivation.* But he only who has received appropriate *moral culture*, can truly and fully appreciate this *beauty.* In fact, I believe that *regeneration*, the conceptions and joys of the great salvation, imparts a *spiritual illumination* and *perception* to the soul which bears an analogy to the eye in the body. The *material* universe becomes beauti-

ful to us, when it assumes the loveliness of *spiritual being;* when it images to us pure and gentle affections; or when in its *awful* movements it speaks to us of the Omnipotent. Proper *spiritual culture* and *illumination* impart ability to see and feel, more and more keenly, the beauties of nature, and lead the mind of the admirer "from *nature* up to *nature's God.*"

Another reason why moral and religious culture should be united to mental, is the reciprocal and reflex influence which correct moral culture exerts on the intellect. The indissoluble connexion between the mind and the heart makes it impossible to act upon the one without imparting an influence to the other. You cannot cultivate the heart without affecting the mind, and vice versa.

There is a diversity of ways in which correct spiritual and moral culture increase the vigour and expansion of the human mind; and he who cannot see distinctly that such expansion of mind is a *necessary* and *legitimate fruit* of the process, closes his eyes to the clear light of *reason.*

In the first place, then, correct moral culture must tend to *mental* improvement, because it introduces to the mind *sublime* and *deeply interesting truths.* "A distinguished barrister of our day who has but little faith in *evangelical doctrines,* recommends to his law students the *frequent perusal* of the volumes that discuss those doctrines; because nowhere else can be found such *invigorating argument* on such *elevating theories.* Indeed, the very allusion to the ideas *God, eternity, holiness,* is sufficient to show that whoever comes into contact with them must be *intellectually quickened* and *expanded.* If *intellectually,* still more so *morally.* He who communes with the truth of God employs the means of spiritual growth."*

If I desired to give vigour to a man's mind, and enlarge the sphere of its vision, I should like to fasten it on the truth that God never had a *beginning* and never shall have an *end.* I would set it to receiving this truth, and to the *grappling* with it. I know that in endeavouring to comprehend this truth, the mind will be quickly *mastered,* and in endeavouring to push on to its boundary lines it will fall down weary with travel, and see infinity still stretching beyond. He will feel like Henry Kirke White, who,

* Bib. Repository, vol. x. p. 170.

musing on this lofty theme, felt the littleness and feebleness of the human mind in its efforts to grasp this subject, and said :—

"———————— O! who can strive
To comprehend the vast, the awful truth
Of the *eternity that hath gone by*,
And not recoil from the dismaying sense
Of human impotence? The life of man
Is summ'd in bustle of days, and in sepulchres
But the eternal God had no *beginning;*
He hath no *end.* Time had been with him
For *everlasting*, ere the dædal world
Rose from the gulf of loveliness.

"We feel it possible that even yon sun
May roll forever:—but we shrink amazed,
We stand aghast, when we reflect that time
Knew no commencement;—that heap age on age
And million upon million, without end,
And we shall never span the void of days
That were, and are not but in retrospect.

"O! who can compass the *Almighty mind?*
Who can unlock the secrets of the High?
Who can apply the futile argument
Of *finite* beings to *infinity?*"*

But the effort will have been a grand mental discipline; and the man, while strengthening his mind by a mighty exercise, will have learned the *hardest* and most *useful* of *all lessons*, that intellect is not *omnipotent;* but that the greatest wisdom may be oftentimes the knowing ourselves ignorant. In fact, there is nothing so salutary for the mind as the truths of the Bible, which we take for granted must be the rule and text book in a course of *moral training* The sublimity of the topics of which it treats; the dignified manner of handling them; the nobleness of the mysteries which it developes; the illumination which it throws on points the most interesting to creatures conscious of immortality;—all these conspire to produce a most happy result on the mind that becomes familiar with them; so that if the person should not be benefited *morally*, he would be *intellectually.*

Take the man whose mind has been devoted to *commercial* pursuits, and let his heart become *rectified;* let him become a follower of Jesus Christ. There will occur in

* Henry Kirke White's Works, p. 50.

*his* case a most interesting mental revolution. In place of oceans which can be measured and fathomed, he turns his thoughts to the boundless ocean of eternity. In place of intercourse with beings of a day of his own race, he holds communion with creatures of a more glorious intelligence; he sympathizes with the Father of spirits, and brings from the celestial regions freights of holy influence more precious than any earthly merchandise. In place of ledgers in which he casts up the debtor and creditor of a few fellow worms, there arises before him the vast volume of doomsday; and his gazings are often on the final balance sheet of the human *population.*

In the second place, correct moral culture rectifies unholy *passions* and *appetites*, and prepares the mind, by a salutary process, for the best mental *results.* Whoever would cultivate the mind must restrain the appetites. He that would strive for the mastery must be temperate in all things. *Appetites*, *affections*, *desires*, *impulses*, manifest themselves in earliest infancy, before the faculties of thought and reason develope themselves. It is the appropriate province of *moral culture* to take these under her guardianship; and whereas they are disordered and liable to the greatest abuses, she seeks to regulate them, and to establish moral virtues, and to form a religious and moral character, and make men good and useful, which is the great end of education. There is a close and *indissoluble* connexion between the *moral* and the *mental* powers. The *passions* exert a powerful influence on the *judgment.* The voice of *reason* is often drowned by the cry of warring and *impetuous desires.* The *understanding* will often give assent to the greatest absurdities, when the volition has resolved to take up their advocacy. Now, so long as the *moral* powers are *disordered*, so likewise must be the *mental.* So long as the heart is depraved and disturbed, the mind in a certain degree must be out of joint. If you would give the mind fair play; if you would develope the powers to the highest extent, there must be applied a corrective process. When conflicting with unholy and *impetuous passions*, you cannot tell what a man's *understanding* is. While a mountain is pressing upon it—while *biased* in its *decisions*, and impelled to wrong *conclusions*, the intellect can never give us its best *results.* If, by the corrective influence of *moral training*—if, by the renewal

of the soul in holiness, there be not given new capacities to the mind, (which we do not maintain,) what it before possessed is allowed to develope itself; and this is *practically* the same as if new *powers* were given.

Again, the culture of the heart of which we have spoken subserves *intellectual improvement*, in a high degree, because it secures communion with God, the Eternal Mind. This is adapted to improve the mind on the principle that intercourse and communion with superior minds increases its power in proportion to the closeness of the sympathy, and the greatness of the intellect with which we commune. One of the most important lessons of moral culture is, "that nothing is so well suited to draw out all the powers of the mind into their most perfect operation, as to bring it into intercourse with Him who is the source and centre of all minds. His presence alone, felt and enjoyed, will more quicken, illuminate, and enlarge the mind of man than *all other influences besides*. It rouses and stimulates all that is spiritual or intellectual within us to be consciously in the presence of a man of great intellectual excellence; must not he then who, by the sense-surmounting power of faith, dwells in the secret place of the Most High, have of all men, other things being equal, incomparably the purest, richest, mightiest mental life? A consciousness of the *presence* of the Supreme Mind!—what intellectual alertness, what stirring of the mental fires, what proclivity to thought, what capacity of great and just conceptions, what security against partial, low, incomprehensive views must not that feeling imply?"*

Note.—We have a simple and practical illustration of the effect of the gospel on the *intellect* among pagans. Take the following example from Mr. Williams' Mission to the South Sea Islands:—

"That the natives are *anxious to obtain*, and *quick in receiving instruction*, have been abundantly shown in the preceding narrative. I think it right, however, to remark, that, while there is ample evidence of their having possessed good powers of mind, previous to the introduction of Christianity, with that period a new era commenced, not only in their moral history, but also in their intellectual. The process of instruction under which they have been brought, the new wants and desires created by the supply of knowledge, the excitement produced by a series of discoveries, many of which were so wonderful and sublime that they could not fail both to quicken and enlarge their faculties, and, above all, the elevating power of vital religion, have made them mentally, as well

* Dr. Skinner's Preaching and Hearing, p. 18.

as spiritually, "new creatures in Christ Jesus." This has often appeared, in our evening conversations with the natives; for the missionary keeps open house, which, at the close of the day, is often a full house, so many come to ask questions, and acquire knowledge; but still more strikingly in their addresses and sermons. Perhaps no minister, even the most gifted, could select their illustrations or make their quotations with greater judgment and force. In the latter point, I have often been struck with their holy ingenuity: and perhaps I may be pardoned for giving the following instance of this excellence. A few weeks after I had taken leave of Raiatea for England, I had occasion to return to that island; and a short time subsequent to my arrival, I found that a meeting had been convened which I was requested to attend. I knew not its object, until the king's speaker arose, and told me, that they had met to request me to abandon my intention of visiting England. After many interesting addresses, a chief arose, and with great gravity said, 'Mr. Williams, I have been reading to-day what Paul wrote to the Philippians, "I am in a strait between two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better; nevertheless, to abide in the flesh is more needful for you." Now we all know that you must wish to see your friends, and visit your native country, after so long an absence; this is very reasonable; but don't you think, if Paul was willing to stay even out of heaven to do good to Christians on earth, that you ought to forego the pleasure of visiting England to do good to us?" This was a touching appeal, and feeling it deeply, I replied by expressing my pleasure at receiving this proof of their affection, and promised, on revisiting Tahiti, to consult Mrs. W., and, if we could not remain ourselves, to persuade one of our brother missionaries to reside with them until our return. I had no sooner made this declaration than another arose, and, after thanking me for promising to endeavour to find a substitute, exclaimed, 'But although we have ten thousand instructors in Christ, we have not many fathers, for, in Christ Jesus, *you* have begotten us through the gospel.' "*

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## PART THIRD.

In addition to other considerations, I may be allowed in this connexion, to allude to the superior efficacy of the motives proposed by moral and religious culture to secure rapid improvement of mind. The motives which are embraced in every system of education, that contemplates the culture of the mind, without a recognition of the claims of religion, centre entirely in self; while those proposed by a proper system of moral culture, are of an enlarged and expansive kind. Now it is impossible that there should be enlarged views, when these views centre entirely in *self*.

* Williams' Enterprises in the South Sea Islands, p. 465.

There may be, it is true, lofty and *far-spreading schemes;* but as long as those *schemes* are for the aggrandizement of *self*, they may require a universe for their *sphere*, and yet require to be described as *pitiful* and *niggardly*. The soul was made for the most ample enlargement and enjoyment of God; and yet in its most ample expansions it is infinitely too narrow for God; and yet his love expands and strengthens it, enabling it to hold more and more, and giving it more and more to hold; so that approximation towards God, in goodness and in enjoyment, and consequently in intellectual power, is actually a principle capable of *cultivation*. *Christianity* enjoins the conscientious practice of every virtue which can elevate and adorn the human *character*, and fit men for action, in the widest sphere, and under the influence of the noblest principles. And she proposes a culture, which shall secure the actual *discharge* of all those duties which aim at the highest good of mankind. She requires this as the only satisfactory evidence which she admits of a title to the rewards of *eternity*. "The tree is known by its fruit."—Such is the uncompromising *test* she imposes on the sincerity of all who embrace her *cause*.

1. In speaking *specifically* of efficacious motives, I would name *first*, an *expansive benevolence*. The moral culture which we advocate, insists on the highest possible *development of mind*, in order to make it an instrument of blessing the world. Its principle is, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." "Do unto others, as ye would that they should do unto you." This principle is the precious link that unites man with his neighbour, the golden girdle that binds the community together, and preserves the integrity of the *social compact*. It thus proposes a motive for the attainment of mental excellence, measureless as eternity, and as deeply-stirring and important as the salvation of immortal *spirits*. The kindling desire of doing good, of bettering the condition of others—of rescuing our species from the ills of disease or of ignorance, under which it suffers, is a most effective and sustaining stimulus to the mind; the best preservative from its directing its energies to paltry objects; the surest antidote to vanity, and whatever evil passions may obtrude themselves on the attention. The simple desire of *doing good* cannot *inspire* genius; but in watching over and directing its *efforts;* in silently exclud-

ing from its *productions* all that is gross in *sense*, or bad in *feeling;* in suggesting ideas of benevolent tendency; and in communicating to the mind's action the healthy glow of kindly sentiment, or of philanthropic ardour; it insensibly gives to its works a dignity, an elevation, and a power of expression, such as art, or taste, or learning, or even genius, alone, could never have attained; raising them to a higher stage of mental excellence, clothing them with the loveliness and the glory of moral *beauty*.

2. The next motive to which I will give a passing allusion, in this connexion, is the fact, that a proper course of moral training is efficacious in POINTING OUT and INSISTING ON the observance of the *laws of success*, in all the business of life.

In every department of society, men live by *confidence;* and *confidence*, as Mr. Pitt has justly observed, is a plant of slow growth. How can a man expect to secure the confidence of the public, unless he furnishes a character and title which challenge his claim to it? Men seldom obtain it, without *knowledge*, *talents*, and sterling *integrity*, which has stood the *test of temptation*. Now, moral culture seeks to lay the axe at the root of selfishness; to establish such *principles*, and apply such a divine corrective to the heart; and to lay the foundations for such a character as may be depended on in the most trying circumstances, and in all relations. It would moreover inculcate the practical lesson, that if we would anticipate success in life, there must be a judicious concentration of mental force on the profession or business of our choice; from the limited extent of human power, and the shortness of human life.

It teaches us, moreover, that we must turn to the best advantage all opportunities favourable to our success. The results of human conduct and human effort are defined by laws as certain as those which govern the sun and planets in their wheeling orbits. Even entire nations, and successive ages are powerfully affected by circumstances which to the casual observer are very trivial, but which are really of immense importance. Who can estimate the effect on the nations of the earth, of the preservation of Moses in the ark of bulrushes, by Pharaoh's daughter? Rome was saved from being taken by the Gauls, by the cackling of the sacred geese, kept in the capitol; and yet Rome, the *Eternal City*, comprised all that was formidable in power, refined in

manners, cultivated in art and science, and illustrious in genius, during the long period of 1000 years; and D'Agues-seau, an eminent French author, observes, that the grand destinies of Rome are not yet accomplished; that she reigns throughout the world by her *reason*, after having ceased to reign by her *authority*. Uncounted millions, have been affected by the discovery of America by Columbus. Never was a vessel so richly freighted with the destiny of nations, as that which bore the invincible spirit of Columbus to our *shores*.

The same laws of success, by which apparently *trifling circumstances* affect *nations*, hold good in the case of *individuals*. In the same situation, one man is attentive to the course of events; is watchful of favourable occasions as they arise; decides with promptitude, and acts with intelligence and energy; and in this way controls events, and turns them to his advantage. Another is inactive, neglectful, without foresight to anticipate results; he acts with feebleness and irresolution; and instead of controlling events, becomes the victim of circumstances.

One remark further on the laws of success in life may be demanded. That was a noble lesson which Lord Chatham imparted to his nephew:—"Hold fast, therefore, this sheet anchor of happiness, *religion*. You will often want it in times of most danger, the storms and tempests of life." The greatest chymist of the age, Sir H. Davy, has also evinced remarkable wisdom and a noble preference, in the following language. "I should prefer a *firm religious belief* to every other blessing; for it makes life a discipline of goodness; creates new hopes when all earthly hopes vanish; and throws over the decay, the destruction of existence, the most gorgeous of lights. Religion has always the same beneficial influence on the mind. In youth, in health, in prosperity, it awakens feelings of gratitude and sublime love; and purifies at the same time that it exalts; but it is in misfortune, in sickness, in age, that its effects are most beneficially felt; then it furnishes undecaying sources of consolation; it gives a freshness to the mind which was supposed to have passed away forever, but which is now renovated as an immortal hope. It appears as that evening star of light, in the horizon of life, which we are sure is to become, in another season, a *morning*

star, and it throws its radiance through the gloom and shadow of death."

Without such a hope as we have contemplated, man, in every period of his existence, is a desolate being.

> "But dreadful is their doom whom doubt has driven
> To censure fate, and pious hope forego;
> Like yonder blasted boughs by lightning riven,
> Perfection, beauty, life, they never know."*

3. The immortality of the soul, its essential dignity, the measureless advances which it may make in moral beauty and excellence, under proper training; and a consideration of the sufferings of which it is susceptible by neglect of proper culture, furnishes a motive worthy of *attention*.

Think of the high powers of the soul. Its power of boundless thought—the recording pen of memory—the tablet of the heart—the *creations* of *genius*—the light of *reason*—the glow of enterprise. Its powers are great *intellectually*. It has a sublime capacity of thought. By this it soars into the heavens, *penetrates* the *earth*—penetrates *itself;* questions the *past*, anticipates the *future*, frames to itself, from its own fulness, lovelier and sublimer forms than it beholds; and finds throughout the wide regions of the universe, types and interpreters of its own deep mysteries and glorious aspirations. But *moral greatness* is the *true glory* of the soul; and this depends on moral *culture*. When the soul is smitten with the love of moral beauty and virtue, it binds itself with everlasting cords for life and for death to truth and duty; it espouses the great interests of human nature; hears in its own conscience a voice louder than thunders to ply the one, and stand off from vice when it is in danger; withstands every outward influence which would sever it from bleeding innocence and suffering virtue, or the cause of freedom and religion; reposes an unwavering confidence in God in the darkest hour. In short, it communes with God and angels; it reflects the bright glories of heaven; it mirrors forth the moral splendours of the *universe*. This mind will be ever vigorous and active. No labour can exhaust it—no length of ages can waste its vigour. No pressure of guilt and suffering can destroy its activity. Such a mind, destined to exist and act forever

* Beattie's Minstrel, b. i.

—destined for the bliss of heaven, or the woes of hell, lies in the breast of every human being. What is there then, about man, worthy of such high regard, as the moral welfare of this soul? What principle of education so important, as to secure the *moral interests* of the soul? Every other kind of education, the *physical*, the *intellectual*, should be *subordinate* to this. The object of the few years of our probation is the education of the immortal spirit for *eternity*.

Just turn to what the soul may become by neglect. Even highly enlightened, without *moral culture*, without the influence of the Bible enthroned in the heart, its energies may be perverted to ruinous courses. All history shows, that the energies of the human intellect, when excited by the stimulus of knowledge, and uncontrolled by the influence of religion, are mighty only to destroy. Like the fabled *Phaeton* in the chariot of his father Phœbus, they sweep through the world, spreading consternation and death.

What additional testimony do we require from antiquity, respecting the impotence of *mere knowledge* to preserve a nation's character and glory? or to evince the feebleness of all *natural restraints* and *material* instruments of philosophy and skill?

> "——— All *true glory* rests,
> All praise, all safety, and all happiness,
> Upon the *moral law*. Egyptian Thebes,
> Tyre, by the margin of the sounding wave,
> Palmyra, central in the desert, fell,
> And the arts died, by which they had been raised.
> Call Archimedes from his buried tomb
> Upon the plain of vanished Syracuse,
> And feelingly the sage shall make report,
> How insecure, now baseless in itself
> Is that philosophy whose sway is framed
> For mere material instruments; how weak
> Those arts and high inventions if *unpropp'd*
> By virtue."

What additional arguments are needed, to show that mere knowledge cannot prove the bulwark of *individual* character? These thoughts may fortify our position. 1. The tendency of mere knowledge, unaccompanied by the aid of moral obligation, is to lead the mind to forgetfulness of

God. While following the discoveries of science, and gathering stores of knowledge, in ways independently of God, it may at length, in the pride of human reason, reject the evidence of *revelation*. 2. Pride, in great intellectual acquisitions, may lead the mind to despise the humbling doctrines of the cross; or a comparison of its accumulated treasures, with those in the humble walks of life whose advantages have been limited, may remove it further from the childlike simplicity of the gospel; and thus prepare it to yield to habits congenial with infidel sentiments. Thus a man may be led on from step to step, till, dreading the inspecting judgment of his Maker, he finds no refuge from anxiety and alarm but in the utter rejection of the being of God, or, at all events, in the refusal to recognise any accountability to the *Supreme* Being. Thus the man may be left to embrace a system which covers the face of nature with *funeral gloom*, while a dark misanthropy spreads over his character; and distrust, jealousy, wrath, revenge, and every evil passion, are imaged forth in his soul. In the midst of millions, he would find himself in a desert. His situation would be that of a hermit; his character that of a fiend. His character would find a counterpart in a Caligula, a Nero, and a Heliogabalus; or in a Danton, a Marat, a Robespierre, and their associates.

I will not undertake to *describe* what the soul will become in eternity, without the redeeming power of *piety* in its probation, because its awful doom can only be felt and realized by itself when actually reduced to that suffering. I will only say, that I tremble when I think of the future condition of that person who was blessed with exalted genius, and the rare and choice gifts of knowledge, but who lived and died in sin.

> "Who knew all *learning*, and all *science* knew,
> And all the subtle, nice affinities
> Of matter traced; its virtues, motions, laws;
> And most familiarly and deeply talk'd
> Of mental, moral, natural, divine;
> And to the music of the rolling spheres
> Intelligently listened; and gazed far back
> Into the awful depths of Deity:
> Did all that *mind* assisted most *could* do;
> And yet in misery *lived*—in misery *died*,
> Because he wanted holiness of heart."*

* Pollok's Course of Time, book iv.

If there be one among the number of the lost, who will realize more keenly than the rest, Pollok's description of "Eternal Death," it will be the man of *towering* but *perverted* genius and knowledge.

> "——— Of heavenly make
> Original the being seem'd, but fallen,
> And worn, and wasted with enormous wo;
> And still around the everlasting lance
> It writhed, convulsed, and utter'd mimic groans,
> And tried and wish'd, and ever tried and wish'd
> To die; but could not die."

What, then, it may be asked, shall be done? Is knowledge a dangerous thing? Shall this precious gift be withheld from the great mass of the people? Must we admit that there is a literal as well as an allegorical truth in the soliloquy the immortal bard puts into the mouth of the arch fiend?

> "One fatal tree there stands of knowledge call'd,
> Forbidden them to taste; knowledge forbidden?
> Suspicious reasonless. Why should their Lord
> Envy them that? Can it be sin to know?
> Can it be death? And do they only stand
> By ignorance?
> O fair foundation laid, whereon to build
> Their ruin! Hence I will excite their minds
> With more desire to know and to reject
> Envious commands, invented with design
> To keep them low, when knowledge might exalt
> Equal with gods; aspiring to be such,
> They taste and die; what likelier can ensue?"*

Of knowledge, independently of a *moral* and *religious* influence, it is *literally true* that we taste and die. But there is an "elixir of life," which can save and render knowledge the glory of our nature—the mighty instrument of blessing our race. There is a *moral ingredient* which, mingling with the powerful tonic of knowledge, can *save*. When this influence is *predominant*, the *more* knowledge the *better*. We care not how wide and deep are its streams. Let it issue forth in its ten thousand channels, over the face of society. But what is this conservative influence? What is the proper aliment of the spirit?

* Paradise Lost, book iv. line 514.

What training is demanded in order that the moral powers may be properly regulated? What will cure the maladies of the corrupted heart, and turn every description of knowledge to the best account? To these questions we unhesitatingly answer,—the gospel of Jesus Christ. The evangelical principles and doctrines of Christianity, *broadcast* over the community, by the living teacher; and made *efficacious* by the influence of the *Eternal Spirit*. This is a *moral medicine*, which, while it *quickens the understanding*, *purifies the heart;* while it clears the vision to *perceive* truth and right, prepares the *affections* to *embrace* them. It is only the tree of *holiness*—

> "—— of heavenly seed;
> A native of the skies,"

that bears a fruit suited to purify and exalt the human soul in the possession of knowledge. In the spirit of reliance, then, on the *Divine Mind*, in giving man the gospel, we would avow our settled conviction, that the gospel is the *only safe basis of education*. Men cannot be educated without it. They may cavil as much as they please at the doctrine of human depravity, it cannot be denied that while *vice shoots* forth with a wanton and luxuriant energy, *virtue* is a plant of *slow growth*. Diligent effort and assiduous care are requisite, in order to bring it to maturity; and the result will never be realized, without the concurrent influence of the gospel. Let then the people taste the fruits of knowledge: but let the heart also be educated. Let their *intellects* be stored with the principles of science, but let them also be imbued with the sentiments of virtue and *piety*. Let the powers of their *understandings* be developed; but let the *moral* faculties of the *immortal spirit* be also called into exercise, and properly directed, regulated, trained, purified.

The efficacy of the combined influence of intelligence and religion, as a principle of education in preserving nations, is abundantly confirmed by *history*. The Puritans, those *pioneers* of modern freedom, were intelligent and deeply imbued with the spirit of Christianity. The English revolution of 1640 was as exciting and troublesome a time as the French revolution of 1789. But, controlled by the conservative principles of piety, the English patriots

were saved from the mad excesses of the French revolutionists. True, they executed their king, but with the *stern patriotism* of Brutus, who slew his best friend, not because he hated Cesar, but because he loved *Rome* more; and not with the insane thirst of royal blood that characterized the *French* regicides. They contended earnestly; but it was for the defence of great principles, and not the gratification of malign passions. If they trampled coronets and mitres in the dust, it was not as the insignia of office, but as the instruments of tyranny. They loved the *king*, while they hated the *despot*. All the constitutional liberty which now exists in the world, can be traced back *directly* to the religious patriots of 1640. They formed the bone, *sinew*, and muscle of English patriotism. Even Hume himself, a bigoted monarchist and infidel, admits that all the great principles of English liberty, as they are now understood and asserted, were developed and maintained by the Puritans; and it was their religion that made them what they were—it was the principal element in their *character*. They bore in their bosoms the sacred love of liberty and *religion*.*

Under the auspices of men combining such elements, and educated under the influence of such *principles*, the foundations of our American republic were laid. Ere they left the little bark, the Mayflower, that bore them to our shores, they formed themselves into a body politic, having for its basis the *fundamental principle*, that they should be ruled by the majority. Here is the *germ* of that tree of liberty which now rears its lofty top to the heavens, spreading its branches over the length and breadth of our land, and under whose shade thirteen millions of freemen are reposing. Intelligence was cultivated by our *pilgrim fathers*, and devotion to the great principles of liberty and religion. These principles were taught by them in the family, in the school, in the sanctuary, and in the halls of legislation. They descended as a precious patrimony to their children, in their successive generations, increasing constantly in vigour and strength, till the spirit of liberty broke out in the revolutionary war, and was imbodied in that excellent form of government which, while it blesses with equal rights and privileges the millions of our own land, is sending forth a redeeming influence to the more numerous millions of other

* Hume's England, vol. v. page 183.

*lands*, who are groaning under the yoke of oppression and tyranny.

Indeed, the *union* of *sound morals* and *intelligence* is among the most effectual of the causes that contribute to the welfare of nations; and, consequently, wherever these are combined and united with the firmest bands, you will see the most perfect development of good government. The fact is well understood, that he will not purely serve his country, who neglects his God. He cannot be a *safe counsellor* who never *prays;* and that man always has his *price*, who *glories* in his sin. And there can be no safe, prosperous government, where the relation which connects man with his God is not distinctly *recognised.* This *relation* imbodies a *principle* more fruitful in the choicest moral influences on *individual character*, and on *communities*, than any *other.* The voice of history sustains this position, and declares with trumpet tongue, that the only safe principle in education is the necessity of an indissoluble bond of union between *mental* and *moral culture.*

# No. VI.

## THE DRUNKARD RECLAIMED.

BY MRS. HARRIET BEECHER STOWE.

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"And so you will not sign this paper," said Alfred Melton to his cousin, a fine looking young man, who was lounging by the centre table.

"Not I, indeed. What in life have I to do with these decidedly vulgar temperance pledges? Pshaw! they have a relish of whisky in their very essence!"

"Come, come, Cousin Melton," said a brilliant, dark-eyed girl, who had been lolling on the sofa during the conference, "I beg of you to give over attempting to evangelize Edward. You see, as old Falstaff has it, 'he is little better than one of the wicked.' You must not waste such valuable temperance documents on him."

"But seriously, Melton, my good fellow," resumed Edward, "this signing, and sealing, and pledging, is altogether an unnecessary affair for me. My past and present habits, my situation in life, in short, every thing that can be mentioned with regard to me, goes against the supposition of my ever becoming the slave of a vice so debasing; and this pledging myself to avoid it, is something altogether needless, nay, by implication, it is degrading. As to what you say of my influence, I am inclined to the opinion, that if every man will look to himself, every man will be looked to. This modern notion of tacking the whole responsibility of society on to every individual, is one I am not at all inclined to adopt; for, first, I know it is a troublesome doctrine; and, secondly, I doubt if it be a true one. For both which reasons I shall decline extending it my patronage."

"Well, positively," exclaimed the lady, "you gentlemen have the gift of continuance in an uncommon degree. You have discussed this matter backwards and forwards, till I am ready to perish. I will take this matter in hand myself,

and sign a temperance pledge for Edward, and see that he gets into none of those naughty courses upon which you have been so pathetic."

"I dare say," said Melton, glancing on her brilliant face with evident admiration, "that you will be the best temperance pledge he could have. But every man, cousin, may not be so fortunate."

"But, Melton," said Edward, "seeing my steady habits are so well provided for, you must carry your logic and eloquence to some poor fellow less favoured." And thus the conference ended.

"What a good, disinterested fellow Melton is," said Edward, after he had left.

"Yes, good as the day is long," said Augusta, "but rather prosy after all. This tiresome temperance business! One never hears the end of it, nowadays. Temperance papers — temperance tracts—temperance hotels — temperance this, that, and the other thing, even down to temperance pocket-handkerchiefs for little boys! Really, the world is getting intemperately temperate."

"Ah! well, with the security you have offered, Augusta, I shall dread no temptation."

Edward Howard was a young man whose brilliant talents, and captivating manners, had placed him first in the society in which he moved. Though without property or weight of family connexions, he had become a leader in the circles where these appendages are most considered, and there were none of their immunities and privileges that were not freely at his disposal.

Augusta Elmore was conspicuous in all that lies within the sphere of feminine attainment. She was an orphan, and accustomed from a very early age to the free enjoyment and control of an independent property. This circumstance, doubtless, added to the magic of her personal graces, in procuring for her that flattering deference which beauty and wealth secure.

For a while their absorbing attachment to each other tended to withdraw them from the temptations and allurements of company, and many a long winter evening passed delightfully in the elegant quietude of home, as they read, and sang, and talked of the past, and dreamed of the future, in each other's society. But, contradictory as it may appear to the theory of the sentimentalist, it is nevertheless a

fact, that two persons cannot always find sufficient excitement in talking to each other merely ; and this is especially true of those to whom high excitement has been a necessary of life. After a while, the young couple, though loving each other none the less, began to respond to the many calls which invited them again into society, and the pride they felt in each other added zest to the pleasures of their return.

As the gaze of admiration followed the graceful motions of the beautiful wife, and the whispered tribute went round the circle whenever she entered, Edward felt a pride beyond all that flattery, addressed to himself, had ever excited. And Augusta, when told of the convivial talents, and the powers of entertainment which distinguished her husband, could not resist the temptation of urging him into society, even oftener than his own wishes would have led him.

It was not until the cares and duties of a mother began to confine her at home, that she first felt, with a startling sensation of fear, that there was an alteration in her husband ; though even then the change was so shadowy and indefinite, that it could not be defined by words.

It was known by that quick, prophetic sense, which reveals to the heart of woman the first variation in the pulse of affection, though it be so slight that no other touch can detect it.

Edward was still fond, affectionate, admiring, and when he tendered her all the little attentions demanded by her situation, or caressed and praised his beautiful son, she felt satisfied and happy. But when she saw that even without her the convivial circle had its attractions, and that he could leave her to join it, she sighed—she scarce knew why. "Surely," she said, "I am not so selfish as to wish to rob him of pleasure, because I cannot enjoy it with him. But yet, once he told me there was no pleasure where I was not. Alas ! is it true, what I have so often heard, that such feelings cannot always last?"

Poor Augusta ! She knew not how deep reason she had to fear. She saw not the temptations that surrounded her husband, in the circles where to all the stimulus of wit and intellect, was often added the zest of *wine*, used far too freely for safety.

It was at this period in the life of Edward, that one judicious and manly friend, who would have had the courage

to point out to him the danger that every one else perceived, might have saved him. But among the circle of his acquaintances, there was none such. "*Let every man mind his own business*," was their universal maxim.

It was a cold winter evening, and the wind whistled drearily around the close shutters of the parlour in which Augusta was sitting. Every thing around her bore the marks of elegance and comfort.

Splendid books and engravings lay about in every direction. Vases of rare and costly flowers exhaled perfume, and magnificent mirrors multiplied every object. All spoke of luxury and repose, save the anxious and sad countenance of its mistress.

It was late, and she had watched anxiously for her husband for many long hours. She drew out her gold and diamond repeater, and looked at it. It was long past midnight. She sighed as she remembered the pleasant evenings they had passed together, as her eye fell on the books they had read together, and on her piano and harp, now silent, and thought of all he had said and looked, in those days when each was all to the other.

She was aroused from this melancholy revery by a loud knocking at the street door. She hastened to open it, but started back at the sight it disclosed—her husband borne by four men.

"Dead! is he dead?" she screamed in agony.

"No ma'am," said one of the men, "but he might as well be dead as in such a fix as this."

The whole truth, in all its degradation, flashed on the mind of Augusta. Without a question or comment, she motioned to the sofa in the parlour, and her husband was laid there. She locked the street door, and when the last retreating footstep had died away, she turned to the sofa, and stood gazing in fixed and almost stupified silence on the face of her senseless husband.

Augusta was a woman of no common energy of spirit, and when the first wild burst of anguish was over, she resolved not to be wanting to her husband and children in a crisis so dreadful.

"When he wakes," she mentally exclaimed, "I will warn and implore; I will pour out my whole soul to save him. My poor husband, you have been misled, betrayed.

But you are too good—too generous—too noble to be sacrificed without a desperate struggle."

It was late the next morning before the stupor in which Edward was plunged began to pass off. He slowly opened his eyes, started up wildly, gazed hurriedly around the room, till his eye met the fixed and sorrowful gaze of his wife. The past instantly flashed upon him, and a deep flush passed over his countenance. There was a dead, a solemn silence; until Augusta, yielding to her agony, threw herself into his arms and wept.

"Then you do not hate me, Augusta?" said he, sorrowfully.

"Hate you—never—but O, Edward, Edward, what has beguiled you?"

"My wife—you once promised to be my guardian in virtue—such you are, and will be. O, Augusta, you have looked on what you shall never see again—never—never—so help me God!" said he, looking up with solemn earnestness.

And Augusta, as she gazed on the noble face, the ardent expression of sincerity and remorse, could not doubt that her husband was saved. But Edward's plan of reformation had one grand defect. It was merely modification and retrenchment, and not *entire abandonment*. He could not feel it necessary to cut himself off entirely from the scenes and associations where temptation had met him. He considered not that when the temperate flow of the blood, and the even balance of the nerves has once been destroyed, there is, ever after, a double and fourfold liability which often makes a man the sport of the first untoward chance.

He still contrived to stimulate sufficiently to prevent the return of a calm and healthy state of the mind and body, and to make constant self-control and watchfulness necessary.

It is a great mistake to call nothing intemperance but that degree of physical excitement which completely overthrows the mental powers. There is a state of nervous excitability, resulting from what is often called moderate stimulation, which often long precedes this, and is, in regard to it, like the premonitory warnings of the fatal cholera, an unsuspected draft on the vital powers, from which, at any moment, they may sink into irremediable collapse.

Such was the case with Edward. He had lost his inte-

rest in his regular business, and he embarked the bulk of his property in a brilliant scheme then in vogue. And when he found a crisis coming, threatening ruin and beggary, he had recourse to the fatal stimulus, which, alas, he had never wholly abandoned.

At this time he spent some months in a distant city, separated from his wife and family, while the insidious power of temptation daily increased, as he kept up, by artificial stimulus, the flagging vigour of his mind and nervous system.

It came at last—the blow which shattered alike his brilliant dreams and his real prosperity. The large fortune brought by his wife vanished in a moment, so that scarcely a pittance remained in his hands. From the distant city where he had been to superintend his schemes, he thus wrote to his too confiding wife:

"Augusta, all is over—expect no more from your husband—believe no more of his promises—for he is lost to you and you to him. Augusta, our property is gone—*your* property, which I have blindly risked, is all swallowed up. But is that the worst? No—no—Augusta, I am lost—lost—body and soul, and as irretrievably as the perishing riches I have squandered. Once I had energy—health—nerve—resolution—but all are gone—yes, yes, I have yielded—I do yield daily to what is at once my tormentor and my temporary refuge from intolerable misery. You remember the sad hour you first knew your husband was a drunkard. Your look, on that morning of misery, shall I ever forget it! Yet blind and confiding as you were, how soon did your ill-judged confidence in me return. Vain hopes! I was even then past recovery—even then sealed over to blackness of darkness forever.

"Alas, my wife—my peerless wife! why am I your husband? why the father of such children as you have given me? Is there nothing in your unequalled loveliness—nothing in the innocence of our helpless babes, that is powerful enough to recall me? No, there is not.

"In some peaceful retirement you may concentrate your strong feelings upon your children, and bring them up to fill a place in your heart, which a worthless husband has abandoned. If I leave you now, you will remember me, as I have been—you will love me and weep for me when dead—but if you stay with me, your love will be worn out:

I shall become the object of disgust and loathing. Therefore farewell, my wife—my first, best love, farewell—with you I part with hope—

> "'————and with hope, farewell fear,
> Farewell remorse: all good to me is lost;
> Evil, be thou my good.'

This is a wild strain—but fit for me—do not seek for me, do not write—nothing can save me."

Thus abruptly began and ended the letter that conveyed to Augusta the deathdoom of her hopes. There are moments of agony, when the most worldly heart is pressed upward to God, even as a weight will force upward the reluctant water. Augusta had been a generous, a highminded, an affectionate woman, but she had lived entirely for this world. Her chief good had been her husband, and her children. These had been her pride, her reliance, her dependence. Strong in her own resources, she had never felt the need of looking to a higher power for assistance and happiness. But when this letter fell from her trembling hand, her heart died within her at its wild and reckless bitterness.

In her desperation she looked up to God. "What have I to live for now?" was the first feeling of her heart.

But she repressed this inquiry of selfish agony, and besought Almighty assistance to nerve her weakness; and here first began that practical acquaintance with the truths and hopes of religion, which changed her whole character.

The possibility of blind confiding idolatry of any earthly object was swept away by the fall of her husband, and with the full energy of a decided and restless spirit, she threw herself on the protection of an Almighty helper. She followed her husband to the city whither he had gone—found him, and vainly attempted to save.

There were the usual alternations of short-lived reformations, exciting hopes only to be destroyed. There was the gradual sinking of the body, the decay of moral feeling and principle—the slow but sure approach of disgusting animalism, which marks the progress of the drunkard.

It was some years after, that a small and partly ruinous tenement in the outskirts of A————, received a new family. The group consisted of four children, whose wan and wistful countenances, and still, unchildlike deportment, testified an early acquaintance with want and sorrow. There

was the mother, faded and careworn, whose dark and melancholy eyes, pale cheeks, and compressed lips, told of years of anxiety and endurance. There was the father, with haggard face, unsteady step, and that callous, reckless air that betrayed long familiarity with degradation and crime. Who that had seen Edward Howard in the morning and freshness of his days, could have recognised him in this miserable husband and father; or who in this worn and wo-stricken woman, would have known the beautiful, brilliant, and accomplished Augusta? Yet such changes are not fancy, as many a bitter and broken heart can testify.

Augusta had followed her guilty husband through many a change, and many a weary wandering. All hope of reformation had gradually faded away. Her own eyes had seen, her ears had heard, all those disgusting details, too revolting to be portrayed. For in drunkenness there is no royal road—no salvo for greatness of mind, refinement of taste, or tenderness of feeling. All alike are merged in the corruption of a moral death.

The traveller, who met Edward reeling by the roadside, was sometimes startled to hear the fragments of classical lore, or wild bursts of half-remembered poetry, mixing strangely with the imbecile merriment of intoxication. But when he stopped to gaze, there was no farther mark on his face or in his eye, by which he could be distinguished from the loathsome and lowest drunkard.

Augusta had come with her husband to a city where they were wholly unknown, that she might, at least, escape the degradation of their lot in the presence of those who had known them in better days.

Augusta had been here but a few weeks, before her footsteps were traced by her only brother, who had lately discovered her situation, and urged her to forsake her unworthy husband and find refuge with him.

"Augusta, my sister, I have found you," he exclaimed, as he suddenly entered one day, while she was busied with the work of her family.

"Henry, my dear brother!" There was a momentary illumination of countenance accompanying these words, which soon faded into a mournful quietness, as she cast her eyes around on the scanty accommodations and mean apartment.

"I see how it is, Augusta—step by step, you are sink-

ing—dragged down by a vain sense of duty to one no longer worthy. I cannot bear it any longer, I have come to take you away."

Augusta turned from him, and looked abstractedly out of the window. Her features settled in thought. Their expression gradually deepened from their usual tone of mild, resigned sorrow, to one of keen anguish.

"Henry," said she, turning toward him, "never was mortal woman so blessed in another, as I once was in him. How can I forget it? Who knew him in those days that did not admire and love him? They tempted and ensnared him; and even I urged him into the path of danger. He fell, and there was none to help. I urged reformation, and he again and again promised, resolved, and began. But again they tempted him, even his very best friends; yes, and that, too, when they knew his danger. They led him on as far as it was safe for *them* to go, and when the sweep of his more excitable temperament took him past the point of safety and decency, they stood by and coolly wondered and lamented. How often was he led on by such heartless friends to humiliating falls, and then driven to desperation by the cold look, averted faces, and cruel sneers of those whose medium temperament and cooler blood saved them from the snares which they saw were enslaving him. What if *I* had forsaken him *then?* What account should I have rendered to God? Every time a friend has been alienated by his comrades, it has seemed to seal him with another seal. I am his wife—and mine will be *the last.* Henry, when I leave him, I *know* his eternal ruin is sealed. I cannot do it now; a little longer; a little longer; the hour I see must come. I know my duty to my children forbids me to keep them here; take them, they are my last earthly comforts, Henry; but you must take them away. It may be—O God—perhaps it *must be*, that I shall soon follow; but not till I have tried *once more.* What is this present life to one who has suffered as I have? Nothing. But eternity! O, Henry!—eternity—how can I abandon him to *everlasting* despair! Under the breaking of my heart I have borne up. I have borne up under *all* that can try a woman—but *this* thought"—She stopped, and seemed struggling with herself; but at last, borne down by a tide of agony, she leaned her head on her hands; the tears streamed

through her fingers, and her whole frame shook with convulsive sobs.

Her brother wept with her; nor dared he again to touch the point so solemnly guarded. The next day Augusta parted from her children, hoping something from feelings that, possibly, might be stirred by their absence, in the bosom of their father.

It was about a week after this, that Augusta one evening presented herself at the door of a rich Mr. L——, whose princely mansion was one of the ornaments of the city of A——. It was not till she reached the sumptuous drawing-room, that she recognised in Mr. L——, one whom she and her husband had frequently met in the gay circles of their early life. Altered as she was, Mr. L—— did not recognise her, but compassionately handed her a chair, and requested her to wait the return of his lady, who was out; and then turning, he resumed his conversation with another gentleman.

"Now, Dallas," said he, "you are altogether excessive and intemperate in this matter. Society is not to be reformed by every man directing his efforts toward his neighbour, but by every man taking care of himself. It is you and I, my dear sir, who must begin with ourselves, and every other man must do the same; and then society will be effectually reformed. Now this modern way, by which every man considers it his duty to attend to the spiritual matters of his next-door neighbour, is taking the business at the wrong end altogether. It makes a vast deal of appearance, but it does very little good."

"But suppose your neighbour feels no disposition to attend to his own improvement—what then?"

"Why, then, it is his own concern, and not mine. What my Maker requires is, that I do *my* duty, and not fret about my neighbour's."

"But, my friend, that is the very question. What is the duty your Maker requires? Does it not include some regard to your neighbour, some care and thought for his interest and improvement?"

"Well, well, I do that by setting a good example. I do not mean by example, what you do—that is, that I am to stop drinking wine because it may lead him to drink brandy, any more than that I must stop eating, because he may eat too much and become a dyspeptic; but that I am to use my

wine, and every thing else, temperately and decently, and thus set him a good example."

The conversation was here interrupted by the return of Mrs. L——. It recalled, in all its freshness, to the mind of Augusta, the days when both she and her husband had thus spoken and thought.

Augusta received in silence from Mrs. L—— the fine sewing for which she came, and left the room.

"Ellen," said Mr. L—— to his wife, "that poor woman must be in trouble of some kind or other. You must go some time, and see if any thing can be done for her."

"How singular!" said Mrs. L——, "she reminds me all the time of Augusta Howard. You remember her, my dear?"

"Yes, poor thing! and her husband too. That was a shocking affair of Edward Howard's. I hear that he became an intemperate, worthless fellow. Who could have thought it!"

"But you recollect, my dear," said Mrs. L——, "I predicted it six months before it was talked of. You remember at the wine party which you gave after Mary's wedding, he was so excited that he was hardly decent. I mentioned then that he was getting into dangerous ways. But he was such an excitable creature, that two or three glasses would put him quite beside himself. And there is George Eldon, who takes off his ten and twelve glasses, and no one suspects it."

"Well, it was a great pity," replied Mr. L——, "Howard was worth a dozen George Eldons."

"Do you suppose," said Dallas, who had listened thus far in silence, "that if he had moved in a circle where it was the universal custom to *banish all stimulating drinks*, he would thus have fallen?"

"I cannot say," said Mr. L——, "perhaps not."

Mr. Dallas was a gentleman of fortune and leisure, and of an ardent and enthusiastic temperament. Whatever engaged him, absorbed his whole soul; and of late years, his mind had become deeply engaged in schemes of philanthropy for the improvement of his fellow men. He had, in his benevolent ministrations, often passed the dwelling of Edward, and was deeply interested in the pale and patient wife and mother. He made acquaintance with her through the aid of her children, and, in one way and an-

other, learned particulars of their history, that awakened the deepest interest and concern. None but a mind as sanguine as his would have dreamed of attempting to remedy such hopeless misery, by the reformation of him who was its cause. But such a plan had actually occurred to him. The remarks of Mr. and Mrs. L—— recalled the idea, and he soon found that his projected protegee was the very Edward Howard whose early history was thus disclosed. He learned all the minutiæ from these his early associates without disclosing his aim, and left them, still more resolved upon his benevolent plan.

He watched his opportunity when Edward was free from the influence of stimulus, and it was just after the loss of his children had called forth some remains of his better nature. Gradually and kindly he tried to touch the springs of his mind, and awaken some of its buried sensibilities.

"It is in vain, Mr. Dallas, to talk thus to me," said Edward, when, one day, with the strong eloquence of excited feeling, he painted the motives for attempting reformation—"you might as well try to reclaim the lost in hell. Do you think," he continued in a wild, determined manner, "do you think I do not know all you can tell me—I have it all by heart, sir—no one can preach such discourses as I can on this subject—I know all—believe all—as the devils believe and tremble."

"Ay, but," said Dallas, "to you *there is hope*—you *are not* to ruin yourself forever."

"And who the devil are you, to speak to me in this way?" said Edward, looking up from his sullen despair with a gleam of curiosity, if not of hope.

"God's messenger to you, Edward Howard," said Dallas, fixing his keen eye upon him solemnly; "to you, Edward Howard, who have thrown away talents, hope, and health—who have blasted the heart of your wife, and beggared your suffering children. To you I am the messenger of your God—by me he offers health, and hope, and self-respect, and the regard of your fellow men. You may heal the broken heart of your wife, and give back a father to your helpless children. Think of it, Howard—what if it were possible? only suppose it. What would it be, again to feel yourself a man, beloved and respected as you once were, with a happy home, a cheerful wife, and smiling little ones? Think how you could repay your

poor wife for all her tears? What hinders you from gaining all this?"

"Just what hindered the rich man in hell—'*between us there is a great gulf fixed*'—it lies between me and all that is good—my wife—my children—my hope of heaven are all on the other side."

"Ay, but this gulf can be passed—Howard, what *would you give* to be a temperate man?"

"What would I give?" said Howard—he thought for a moment, and burst into tears.

"Ah, I see how it is," said Dallas, "you need a friend, and God has sent you one."

"What *can* you do for me, Mr. Dallas?" said Edward, in a tone of wonder at the confidence of his assurances.

"I will tell you what I can do—I can take you to my house and give you a room, and watch over you until the strongest temptations are past—I can give you business again. I can do *all* for you that needs to be done, if you will give yourself to my care."

"O God of mercy!" exclaimed the unhappy man, "is there hope for me? I cannot believe it possible—but take me where you choose—I will follow and obey."

A few hours witnessed the transfer of the lost husband to one of the retired apartments in the elegant mansion of Dallas, where he found his anxious and grateful wife still stationed as his watchful guardian.

Medical treatment, useful employment, healthful exercise, simple food and pure water, were connected with a personal supervision by Dallas, which, while gently and politely sustained, at first amounted to actual imprisonment.

For a time the reaction from the sudden suspension of habitual stimulus was dreadful, and, even with tears, did the unhappy man entreat to be permitted to abandon the undertaking. But the resolute steadiness of Dallas and the tender entreaties of his wife prevailed. It is true that he might be said to be saved "so as by fire;" for a fever and a long and fierce delirium wasted him almost to the borders of the grave.

But at length the struggle between life and death was over, and though it left him stretched on the bed of sickness, emaciated and weak, yet he was restored to his right mind, and was conscious of returning health. Let any one who has laid a friend in the grave, and known what it is to

have the heart fail with longing for them day by day, imagine the dreamy and unreal joy of Augusta, when she began again to see in Edward the husband so long lost to her. It was as if the grave had given back the dead!

"Augusta!" said he, faintly, as after a long and quiet sleep he awoke free from delirium. She bent over him. "Augusta, I am redeemed—I am saved—I feel in myself that I am made whole."

The high heart of Augusta melted at these words. She trembled and wept. Her husband wept also, and after a pause he continued:

"It is more than being restored to this life. I feel that it is the beginning of eternal life. It is the Saviour who sought me out, and I know that he is able to keep me from falling."

But we will draw a veil over a scene which words have little power to paint.

"Pray, Dallas," said Mr. L——, one day, "who is that fine looking young man whom I met in your office this morning? I thought his face seemed familiar."

"It is a Mr. Howard—a young lawyer whom I have lately taken into business with me."

"Strange!—impossible!" said Mr. L——. "Surely this cannot be the Howard that I once knew?"

"I believe it is," said Mr. Dallas.

"Why, I thought he was gone—dead and done over long ago, with intemperance."

"He was so—few have ever sunk lower—but he now promises even to outdo all that was hoped of him."

"Strange! Why, Dallas, what did bring about this change?"

"I feel a delicacy in mentioning how it came about to you, Mr. L——, as there undoubtedly was a great deal of 'interference with other men's matters' in the business. In short, the young man fell in the way of one of those meddlesome fellows, who go prowling about, distributing tracts, forming temperance societies, and all that sort of stuff."

"Come, come, Dallas," said Mr. L——, smiling, "I must hear the story for all that."

"First call with me at this house," said Dallas, stopping before the door of a neat little mansion. They were soon in the parlour. The first sight that met their eyes was

Edward Howard, who, with a cheek glowing with exercise, was tossing aloft a blooming boy, while Augusta was watching his motions, her face radiant with smiles.

"Mr. and Mrs. Howard, this is Mr. L——, an old acquaintance, I believe."

There was a moment of mutual embarrassment and surprise, soon dispelled, however, by the frank cordiality of Edward. Mr. L—— sat down, but could scarce withdraw his eyes from the countenance of Augusta, in whose eloquent face he recognised a beauty of a higher cast than even in her earlier days.

He glanced about the apartment. It was simply, but tastefully furnished, and wore an air of retired, domestic comfort. There were books, engravings, and musical instruments. Above all, there were four happy, healthy looking children, pursuing studies or sports at the farther end of the room.

After a short call, they regained the street.

"Dallas, you are a happy man," said Mr. L——, "that family will be a mine of jewels to you."

He was right. Every soul saved from pollution and ruin is a jewel to him that reclaims it, whose lustre only eternity can disclose; and therefore it is written, "They that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever."

# No. VII.

# EARLY PIETY.

## PART FIRST.

### EARLY PIETY POSSIBLE.—REMARKS TO PARENTS.

BY WILLIAM S. PLUMER, D. D.

*Begin early.*—This is the true doctrine, let our views of early piety be what they may. None who will be benefited by these pages will question the susceptibility of the youthful mind to receive impressions which may at some time be matured into a saving change. There are habits of great importance to children, which cannot be acquired too soon. Such are habits of obedience in many things. What parent does not think his child as capable of understanding his meaning in many things, when but a few weeks old, as is the dog that lies on the hearth? You may therefore teach it some things which it is important for it to know, even when very young. This is the training which it receives as an animal. Intellectual and moral training will not so soon be possible. Yet defer not needlessly. First impressions are lasting. See to it that they be desirable. Impressions respecting good and evil your child will have. Let them be according to truth.

It not unfrequently occurs, that on the introduction of a subject we discover in ourselves strong prejudices against it. Sometimes we cannot trace them to their origin and sometimes we can. It is not impossible to find out sufficient causes for all the apparent aversion of many minds towards the subject now presented. It may be asserted as a first principle, that the truly pious do heartily rejoice in the progress of true religion in all cases, if they do but

discover that it is true religion, and not something else in the disguise of piety. And yet it cannot be denied that there are views and feelings among many good people, respecting this matter, whenever introduced, that are exceedingly painful to think upon.

Now, it is not impossible to trace these prejudices to causes which have been in operation for many years.

One of them has been the manner in which the conversions of very young persons have been spoken of from the pulpit and through the press. How often has it of late years been announced, that some great and important discoveries have been made on the subject, and that hitherto the church has been in great ignorance and error. The very pompousness of the announcements which have been made in many places, was sufficient to disgust the less spiritual with the whole subject, and to create strong fears in the minds of the pious. The following are but samples of what has been published in the newspapers respecting the doings of some in transient labours among children. "On examination, mothers obtained comfortable evidence for more than sixty of their children, that they are born of the Spirit of God" —"Upwards of fifty children were converted during our meeting"—"The result of our meeting was the hopeful conversion of more than one hundred children." To "those who, by reason of use, have their senses exercised to discern good and evil," such statements are exceedingly painful. How different this course is from that taken by a patriarch in Israel, very many of whose grandchildren, and other young friends, were professing to have rested their hope in Christ, and to rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Instead of any confident assertions respecting them, he seemed to be unusually solemn, and uncommonly engaged in prayer. When some one said to him that these things must make him very happy, he replied—"Wait! Let us see what sort of fruit they will bear. If that be good, we can then all rejoice together."

Another ground of prejudice is the very injudicious treatment which in most cases those receive who at a very early period profess religion. They are spoiled with attentions. Paul charges Timothy not to bring forward any young convert, however many his years in life, to the conspicuous work of a religious teacher, and assigns this remarkable reason; "lest being lifted up with pride, he fall

into the condemnation of the devil." Well would it have been for the honour of religion if the principle here inculcated had been duly regarded in every department of the church. Who has not been pained at seeing children and young persons who had professed religion, paraded in public as somewhat remarkable, their sayings repeated, and their services called for in conducting prayer, and sometimes even exhortation, among their superiors in age, and wisdom, and piety? Even admitting one to have some true piety, such treatment must induce something unlovely in the whole appearance, unless the grace afforded be without a parallel. How lovely and instructive to mothers the example of the most highly favoured among women, who did not repeat the sayings of her Son, but hid them in her heart. (Luke ii. 51.) Go and do likewise.

Then, again, it is admitted that there are but few, very few examples of unquestionable piety among very young persons. The fact that many of those, who profess religion early, do also die early, seems to leave the matter in a light but little calculated to convince the skeptical. And because the examples of undoubted piety are *few*, some make the inference that there are *none;* and believing that there are none, they do not pray and labour hoping to witness very happy or decisive effects on their children. Indeed many seem to be fairly under the influence of the practical judgment that very early piety governing the *lives* of children is unattainable. Hence the total absence, in many cases, of all direct and earnest efforts for the salvation of the young.

The regulations of families and of schools are also not unfrequently and powerfully opposed to early conversions. A. had a little friend who, at nine years of age, confessed himself ready to serve God at any hazard. The children in his family laughed him to scorn, and knocked at his door when he retired for devotion. And at school his companions would form a circle around him, and shout—"O! here is a little Christian." This course lasted one whole summer. Is it not strange that he was yet able in meekness to bear their taunts, and not withdraw his testimony nor let go his confidence? Yet who cannot see how utterly unfriendly such a situation must be to the maintenance and growth of any thing like the spirit of devotion? Let parents, and guardians, and teachers, therefore, see to

it, that every arrangement be such as not to favour an organized system of persecution ; but on the contrary to afford every facility and encouragement to the youngest for the formation of devotional habits.

These general impressions are, in many cases, very strong and deeply rooted. So true is this, that all the strength of a scriptural argument is necessary to remove them.

Let it be stated that no one has ever yet attempted to justify these general views, from any want of adaptation in Scripture truth to affect even a very youthful mind, nor from any sober interpretation of Scripture statements declaring the thing impossible. On the contrary, the Scriptures afford many instances of plain teaching directly to the contrary. Let us look at a few of them. "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast ordained strength." Ps. viii. 2. The intelligent reader remembers that the Saviour, when on earth, quoted these words, and declared them fulfilled even in his day. Yes, the little ones can, by their hallelujahs, "still the voice of the adversary." "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Matt. xix. 14. It is promised that in the latter day glory "the child shall die an hundred years old." Isa. lxv. 20. That is, the child, in that age, shall be as far advanced in knowledge and in grace as in other ages were ordinarily attained by those who arrived at the great age of a hundred years. Indeed, the tenor of Scripture decidedly encourages us to regard children as suitable subjects of piety. Such passages as Matt. xviii. 4, and 1 Cor. xiv. 20, do not easily admit of any tolerable interpretation on any other supposition. All admit that children may be and are subjects of the renewing influences of the Holy Spirit before they arrive at years of understanding, and that thus they who die in early infancy are fitted for heaven. Why then should it be thought impossible for God to renew and save one whose mind had advanced to the first grades of intellectual and rational exercise? It is not contended that true religion will make men and women of children. It will rather maintain in them every thing that properly belongs to childhood. Let them retain all their feebleness, and diffidence, and feeling of dependence on others, and fond-

ness for retirement from public gaze. All we contend for is, that they be encouraged to carry with them, as children, the spirit of piety.

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## THE WAY TO USE THE BIBLE IN INCULCATING EARLY PIETY.

BY REV. JACOB ABBOTT.

It is of great consequence that you pursue a proper course in endeavouring to interest your children in the study of the Scriptures. Upon a proper use of this volume every thing depends. There are some parts which children can at a very early age understand and appreciate. Others, from their style or subject, will act efficiently on mature minds alone. From the former, which ought to be early read and explained, an immediate and most important religious influence can at once be expected. Selections from the latter should be fixed in the memory, to exert an influence in future years.

For the former of these purposes, the narrative parts, if judiciously selected, are most appropriate in early years. But great care ought to be taken to select those which may be easily understood, and those in which some moral lesson is obvious and simple. Let it be constantly borne in mind, that the object in view in teaching the Bible to a child, is to affect his heart; and it would be well for every mother to pause occasionally, and ask herself, "What moral duty am I endeavouring to inculcate now?—what practical effects upon the heart and conduct of my child is this lesson intended to produce?" To ask a young child such questions as, "Who was the first man?" "Who was the oldest man?" "Who slew Goliath?" may be giving him lessons in pronunciation, but it is not giving him religious instruction. It may teach him to articulate, or it may strengthen his memory, but is doing little or nothing to promote his piety. I would not be understood to condemn such questions. I only wish that parents may understand their true nature. If the real or supposed dexterity of the child in answering them is not made the occasion of showing him

off before company—thus they cherish vanity and self-conceit—it may be well thus to exercise the memory; and some facts which will be useful hereafter may be fixed in this way. But it must not be considered as religious instruction: it has not in any degree the nature of religious instruction.

What then is the kind of instruction which is to be given from the Bible? I will illustrate the method by supposing a case which may bring the proper principles to view. You will imagine the child to be two or three years old.

"Come," says its mother; "come to me, and I will read you a story." It is Sabbath afternoon, we will suppose; the mind of the child is not preoccupied by any other interest.

"Sometimes," continued the mother, "I tell you stories to amuse you. But I am not going to do that now. It is to do you good. Do you understand how it will do you good to hear a story?"

"No, mother."

"Well, you will see. It is the story of Cain and Abel. Do you know any thing about it?"

"Yes; Cain killed Abel."

"Do you know why he killed him?"

"Because he was wicked."

"No; I mean what did Abel do to make Cain angry with him? Did you ever see anybody angry? Were you ever angry yourself?"

"Yes, mother."

"And I suppose you had some cause for it. Now, I will read the account, and see whether you can tell what made Cain angry.—'And Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord.' Do you know what the fruit of the ground is?"

"No, mother."

"It means any thing which grows out of the ground. Cain was a farmer; he planted seeds, and gathered the fruits which grew from them, and he brought some of them to offer them to God. 'And Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock.' Do you know what that means?"

The child hesitates.

"Abel did not cultivate the ground like Cain. He had great flocks of sheep and goats, and he brought some of

the best of those to offer to God. So that you see that Cain and Abel did almost exactly the same thing.

"Now, God does not notice merely what we do, but how we feel while we are doing it. If I should ask you to go and shut the door when you are busy, and if you should go immediately, but feel ill-humoured, God would be displeased. He looks at the heart. Do you ever feel ill-humoured when I wish you to do what you dislike?"

"Yes; sometimes."

"Now Cain, I suppose, did not feel pleasantly when he brought his offering, and God was dissatisfied with him. But God was pleased with Abel's offering, and accepted it. Should you have thought that Cain would have liked this?"

"No; did he like it?"

"No, he did not. He was very much displeased; and it is very remarkable that he was displeased, not only against God, but he was angry with his brother, who had not done him the least wrong. That is the way with us all. If you should do wrong and your sister do right, and I should blame you and praise her, you would be tempted to feel angry with her, just because she had been so happy as to do her duty. How wicked such a feeling is!

"Cain, however, had that feeling, and little children have it very often. It shows itself in different ways. Cain, being a strong man, rose against his brother in the field and killed him. But young children who are weak and small would only strike each other, or say unkind things to one another. Now God is displeased with us when we have these feelings, whether we show them by unkind words, or by cruel violence. There is a particular verse in the Bible which shows this. Should you like to have me find it?"

"Yes, mother."

"I will find it, then. It is in Matt. v. 22. Our Saviour says it. It is this:—'Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire.' This is not the whole of the verse: I will explain the other part some other time."

The reader will perceive at once that the kind of instruction here exemplified, consists in drawing out the moral lesson which the passage is intended to teach, and in giving

it direct and practical application to the circumstances and temptations of the child.*

Go on in this way as your child advances through its earlier years; inculcating, thus practically, the truths and doctrines of the gospel, by making each one a comment upon some portions of its own little history. Aim especially to make the feelings of the heart keep pace with the advance of the understanding. Judicious efforts of this kind God will bless, by leading the heart of the little one who is the subject of them to daily habits of communion with him. Christian influence is increasing its power over the young. Every year is carrying the banner of piety nearer and nearer towards the earlier years of human life, and it is not impossible that it may hereafter be proved, that there is not a single hour in the whole existence of a human soul, so favourable to its conversion, as the hour when it is first able to understand that there is a God in heaven to whom it is accountable.

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## PART SECOND.

## TWO CASES OF EARLY PIETY.

BY WILLIAM S. PLUMER, D.D.

The first is the case of Ann Maria Henry, who died at Ballston, N. Y., aged eleven years and nine months. She

* Parents ought at such times to make ingenious efforts to learn what thoughts and feelings are passing in the minds of children; for sometimes the whole tone and manner of the instruction is to be modified by it. Draw the pupil if possible into conversation. Encourage his question, and try by every means to get a clue at the train of thoughts passing in his mind. The following anecdote illustrates the great diversity of emotion which is produced in different minds by the same narrative: Two children were looking at a picture of the murder by Cain. Abel's crook was lying upon the ground. After contemplating it a moment in silence, one says, with a thoughtful and serious expression of countenance, "I wonder if God could have made Cain as good a man as Abel, if he had wished." Another pause—and then the other said, shaking his head, and throwing into his countenance a look of stern defiance, "Ah, if I had been Abel, and could have got hold of that stick, I would have laid it upon Cain well." How entirely different now the course of remark judiciously adapted to the condition of the latter mind, from that which would be suitable to the former.

was the daughter of the late Rev. Thomas Charlton Henry, D. D., of Charleston, South Carolina.

In the character, life, and death of this young disciple of the Lord Jesus, there was much of deep and peculiar interest. The subject of many and fervent prayers, and trained in the nurture of the Lord, she with the first developments of an early mind gave evidence of being a child of grace.

She looked forward to the ensuing communion Sabbath with an earnest desire and joyful anticipation of uniting herself in a personal profession with the church. From this she was prevented only by her last illness. In relation to it she remarked, "I am providentially prevented. It is a subject on which I feel so deeply that I cannot dwell upon it; I cannot speak of it."

It is an interesting fact in her history, that from early childhood she manifested the deepest interest in the cause of Christian missions. All information in relation to their state and progress she sought with eagerness; her heart was especially drawn out in prayer to God for the conversion of the heathen world. At her own instance she adopted a system of self-denial in relation to certain articles with which she had been indulged, asking the privilege of appropriating to that cause the avails thus saved. And, though well informed in relation to the privations and hardships of the missionary life, she fondly cherished the hope of herself going as a missionary to the heathen.

In her last illness and death, though her bodily sufferings were intense, her patience in enduring them was signally exemplary, and her submission to the Divine will entire. On one occasion, lying apparently in meditation, she, with strong energy of expression and manner, said, "I do submit—I *have* wholly submitted in this sickness to the will of God." On another occasion she said to one of her physicians, "Doctor, I want you to tell me *exactly* what you think of my case; I am willing, I am ready to die at any moment."

On the physician replying that there was no probability of her recovery, that he did not expect it, a smile of unmingled satisfaction played over her features. At another time, in reply to an inquiry on the subject, she said,

"Sweet to lie passive in his hands
And know no will but his."

And at another; "I am willing to live, and I am willing to die; and I am willing to suffer pain, or any thing that will be for the glory of God." At another time she spontaneously said to her mother, "I should be disappointed if I should not die. But I would have no will of my own. I would have it ordered for the glory of God;" and with an emphasis and energy of manner which marked all that she said on these subjects, she added, "If I live, may I live to his glory; and if I die, may I die to his glory."

She had a very strong "desire to depart and to be with Christ." The only thing which gave her any wish to live, was concern for the bereavement of her mother. Filial affection was one of the most strongly marked traits of her character in life. On returning from the interment of her lamented father, she, then a child of only six years old, repaired to the room of her bereaved mother, and as she entered, fixing her eyes steadily on her, approached her, and with an unfaltering voice, and a dignity of manner almost inconceivable in a child so young, while her own eyes were filled with tears, said, "Mamma, do not weep, I will be a comfort to you." And well did she redeem the pledge thus nobly given. This beautiful and lovely feature of character, under the improving power of sanctifying grace, gained strength in death. At one time, being asked by a friend who watched by her bedside, if she was resigned to her sickness, she said, "If I knew I were to die this night I could not shed one tear. Were I to cast a look behind, it would be for my mother." At another time she said to her mother, "How sweet—how delightful would it be, if we could go to heaven together. But, mamma, we must wait God's time. His time is the best. We shall soon meet again;" and asked, "Mamma, do you feel willing to give me up?" On her mother's replying in the affirmative, she with transport said, "O, I am so happy, for I am so anxious to go to heaven!" Her mother withdrawing from the room in tears, a sudden change passed over her before joyful and heavenly countenance, indicating the deepest distress, and even anguish of soul. A friend observed, "Anna, something seems to oppress your mind; be frank and say what it is." She replied with a deep sigh, "If any thing distresses me," with emphasis repeating, "*if any thing* distresses me, it is for my mother. I said a moment since that I wished to die: but I would live

for my mother." At another time she remarked to her uncle, that during the first week of her illness she had felt great anxiety for her mother. On his replying, "If God sees fit to remove you, he will take care of your mother;" she said with great earnestness, "O, uncle, please tell dearest mother *that*," repeating, "*tell her that.*"

The day but one before her death, the family were assembled in her room to witness her dissolution, which was then supposed to be near. While suffering intense pain of body, and unable to converse, her countenance assumed a most heavenly expression. She continued to smile unceasingly, for an hour and a half, on her mother, her little brother, and occasionally on other friends who surrounded her bed. During this time one remark only she uttered: "*I am happy, just as happy as I can be.*"

Her dissolution was eminently peaceful and joyous. This appearing at hand, her mother said, "I commit you into the hands of Jesus." She embraced her mother in her arms, and would have so died, but for the interposition of friends, to allow the inspiration of air. In a moment she was at rest.

Mary Frances Huntington, the oldest daughter of M. P. and S. Huntington, was the first subject of infant baptism, about six years ago, in the church in Milton, North Carolina. She was truly an interesting and intelligent child. At her death, she was not quite ten years old. She had attended constantly, for several years, the Sabbath-school, of which she was very fond. But the facts to be narrated occurred principally within the last three months of her life.

During a protracted meeting in the month of October last, in the neighbourhood, she was first observed to be unusually interested and manifestly affected on the subject of religion. This personal concern for the salvation of her soul was evinced by her marked readiness and anxious fondness to attend all the meetings. Whilst other little girls of her age were grouping together for amusement, she was seeking instruction in some religious circle or exercise, with the seriousness and solemnity of mature age. On several occasions she expressed herself, after the meeting

had closed, as having felt very anxious to attend the inquiry meetings—but did not, because being so young, she did not know whether it was proper or not.

And at the close of the meeting, when Christians were requested to stand and sing the 375th of the Village Hymns—

> "Awake and sing the song
> Of Moses and the Lamb," &c.

little Fanny was observed to stand and sing with high relish and devout animation. Although her friends were quite at a loss to know exactly what to think, or what use to make of these things, yet they laid them up and pondered them in their hearts.

Some three or four weeks after this she expressed herself, in a conversation with one of her classmates, with whom she was most intimate, as entertaining the hope of having become a Christian—referring to the protracted meeting as the time and occasion when she embraced that hope—and solemnly enjoining secrecy, on the ground that she was so young that she *might* be mistaken, and that she wished to be sure before she made it known. From this time till the commencement of her sickness it was noticed, not only by her parents, but others who were frequently with her, that she was unusually serious and retiring, remarkably affectionate and dutiful, and conscientiously attentive to religious exercises. The writer of this little narrative has been struck with her devout and marked attention under preaching, where he has seen her hanging on his lips with a tearful eye and solemn countenance.

On Sabbath night before she was taken sick—just one week previous to her death, she was overheard talking to her two younger brothers respecting their manner of saying their prayers. Among other things, she was heard to tell them that she was afraid that they did not think of God, or of the meaning of their words when they prayed. After thus addressing them for some time, she took them into a private room, and all of them kneeling, she prayed with them aloud, and for them in particular. The next evening she was taken ill of the scarlet fever, at the house of her grandfather, in the same village in which her father lives.

From the commencement of her sickness she seemed to forebode, even to a degree distressing to her friends, that

she would never recover. When any one spoke of what would be done *when* she got well, she would *very* frequently correct the expression, and say, "*if* I get well." And she herself constantly used the term *if*, when speaking of her recovery. On several occasions during her illness, and entirely of her own accord, she spoke in terms of the strongest regret that she had wasted so much time and money in the use of dolls; saying, with solemn emphasis—"if it was to do again, I would not do so." She cautioned also several little girls with whom she was intimate, against playing so much with dolls, as sinful, and painful to the conscience.

A day or two before her disease came to a crisis, she said to her mother, "Mother, why don't you talk to me about God and about dying? Don't you know that I shall die to-night?" Her mother, very much affected, and suffused with tears, was at first unable to speak; but soon replied—"I don't know that you will die, and I hope you will not, to-night." She answered, "Yes, I shall; but don't cry, I have a hope." Soon after this, she was told that the doctor had given her up, and had said that she could not live. The information, though perfectly understood, seemed to produce no alarm whatever, nor even the slightest excitement; on the contrary, it seemed to be rather acceptable; for, after a considerative pause, she sweetly and placidly replied, "Well, I don't care—I would as soon die as live—I shall be far better off in heaven." She was asked if she wished to go home; (to her father's;) she replied, "I should like to go home; but it is no matter—I shall soon be at my heavenly Father's home." When she saw two of her young companions and classmates present, she requested to be left with them alone. When her request was complied with, she called them by name, and exhorted them, at some length, to prepare for death, to pray, to love and obey the Saviour, &c. As she approached her end, when she saw her doting parents and friends weeping around her, she frequently said to them, "Don't weep for me, but meet me in heaven."

On Sabbath, her last Sabbath on earth, she took leave of her parents, grandparents, and other friends present, calling each one by name, and requesting them to kiss her. In the afternoon her tutoress asked her if she remembered little Jane? "Yes," was her reply, "and little Susan too." "Jane, you know," said her tutoress, "when she

was afflicted, could put her trust in Christ; can you do so?" "O yes," was her reply, with animated emphasis. About dusk, the minister asked her, among other things, "Do you love the Saviour, Fanny; do you want to see Him; can you trust yourself with Him?" With unhesitating promptness, emphatic earnestness, and a brightening countenance, she replied, "*O Yes!*" "*O Yes!*" Her father, being overcome on hearing her answer, wept aloud. She turned her head, looked at him, and said, with peculiar sweetness of manner, "Don't cry, papa, don't cry." After this she became insensible, and about 12 o'clock expired, it is hoped, in the arms of Him who said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

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## CASE OF LITTLE JAMES.

BY REV. JOHN TODD.

A FEW years since, a man and his wife arrived in the town of M——, N. Y., as permanent residents. They were young, lately married, and their prospects for the future were bright and cheering. They purchased a farm in M——, which was then a new country, and had happily spent two or three years in this situation, when, by a mysterious providence, the young man was called from this world. With his surviving widow, he left two lovely twin infants, to deplore a loss which time could not retrieve. The widow sought comfort in vain from the limited circle of her acquaintance. There was no minister of the gospel in that region to direct her to the great source of comfort, nor was there a pious friend who could direct her trembling footsteps to the cross of Jesus. But she went to her Bible, and by the assistance of the Spirit of truth, found that consolation which a selfish world can neither bestow nor taste. She mourned indeed a husband who was no more, but she was cheered by the hope that God would protect her and hers. She wept over her innocent babes, and resolved that while she lived, they should never need a mother's care. As they grew up, she endeavoured to teach them the first prin-

ciples of religion, but they received only her instructions. One week after another rolled away,—one Sabbath after another dawned upon the wilderness, but they brought none of its privileges. The wilderness had never echoed with the sound of the church-going bell. The solitary places had never been gladdened by the sound of the footsteps of him who proclaims glad tidings of great joy. The feeling mother clasped her little boys to her aching bosom, and sighed and wept for the opportunity of taking them by the hand, and leading them up to the courts of God. In the days of her childhood she had possessed great advantages, and she now mourned that her babes could only receive instruction from *her* lips. Alas! no man of God came to instruct,—to cheer,—to gladden the bosom of her who, for years, had never heard the whispers of love from the servants of her Saviour. When the little boys were five years old, and before they were old enough to be sensible of their loss, a consumption had fastened upon their tender parent, and she was soon encircled in the cold arms of death. She steadily watched the certain issue of her disease, and even in her last moments, commended her children to Him who is "a Father to the fatherless." A few moments before she expired, she kissed her little boys, who wept, almost without knowing why, on feeling the last grasp of the clay cold hand of their mother. "It is hard," said she to a neighbour who was present, "it is hard for a mother to leave two such helpless babes without friends, and without any one to protect them; but I leave them in the hands of God, and I *do* believe he will protect them. My last prayer shall be for my poor, destitute orphans."

After the death of their mother they were received into the house of a neighbour, a poor widow. In less than a year, one of them was stretched beside his mother beneath the sods.

About this time a pious young lady arrived in the place. She too was an orphan, but was not comfortless. It was her first inquiry how she could do good to the spiritually destitute villagers around her.

In the course of one of her afternoon walks, she met a little boy straggling by the side of the road. There was a something in his countenance which excited interest at once, though he was exceedingly ragged. The young lady was

struck with his appearance, and immediately entered into conversation with him.

"What is your name, my little boy?" said she, gently.

"James."

"Where do you live?"

"With widow Parker, just in the edge of the wood, there, in that little loghouse; can't you see it?"

"I see it; but is widow Parker your mother?"

"No: I had a mother last year, and she loved me. She used to take care of *me* and of my brother *John*. She made our clothes, and taught us to say our prayers and catechisms. O! she was a most good mother."

"But where is your mother?" said the lady, as soothingly as possible.

"O! madam, she is dead! Do you see that graveyard yonder?"

"Yes."

"And the great maple tree which stands in the further corner of it."

"Yes, I see it."

"Well, my poor mother was buried under that tree, and my brother John lies there too. They were both buried deep in the ground, though my mother's grave was the deepest. I shall never see them again, never, never, as long as I live. Will you go with me and see the graves?" continued he, looking at the lady with great earnestness and simplicity.

The short account which the little boy gave of himself awakened the best feelings of the young lady, and she had been devising some plan by which to do him good. For the present, she declined visiting the grave, but continued to converse with him, and to gain his confidence. She found him very ignorant, having never been at school, and the instructions of his pious mother, not having her to repeat and enforce them by precept and example, were nearly forgotten.

A Sabbath-school had never been established in the place, and whether it was practicable to establish one, was doubtful; but she was determined to make the experiment. Accordingly, she visited every little cottage in the village, and urged that the children might be assembled on the next Lord's day, and a school formed. A proposal of this kind was new, was from a new-comer, and was unpopular. All

the old women in the place entered their protest against such innovations. For the first three Sabbaths, the young lady had no other scholar besides her little James. But she had already been taught, that however faint our prospects of doing good at first may be, we should not be discouraged. Our labour may not be lost, though the first blow may not produce much effect. She was sorry that she had so few scholars, but she bent all her energies to the instruction of her little boy, and afterwards felt that Providence had ordered it wisely.

But in a few weeks the prejudices of the people began to wear away, and before the summer closed, this school embraced every child whose age would allow it to attend.

It was the second summer after the establishment of this school, and after little James had become well acquainted with his Testament and catechism, that his health also began to fail. This good young lady beheld his gradual decay with anxiety, visited him frequently, and always wept after having left him. She used often to walk out with him, and to endeavour to cheer him by her conversation.

One pleasant afternoon she led him out by the hand, and at his request visited the spot where lay his mother and little brother. Their graves were both covered with grass, and on the smaller grave were some beautiful flowerets. It was in the cool of a serene summer's day, as they sat by the graves in silence; neither of them feeling like speaking. The lady gazed at the pale countenance of the little boy, upon whose system a lingering disease was preying, while he looked at her with an eye that seemed to say, "I have not long to enjoy your society." Without saying a word, he cut a small stick, and measured the exact length of his little brother's grave, and again seated himself by the lady. She appeared sad while he calmly addressed her.

"You see, Miss S——, that this little grave is shorter than mine will be."

She pressed his little bony hand within her own, and he continued—

"You know not how much I love you—how much I thank you. Before you taught me, I knew nothing of death—nothing about heaven, or God, or angels; I was a very wicked boy till you met me. I love you much, very much, but I would say—something else"—

'And what would you say, James?" inquired the lady, trying to compose her own feelings.

"Do you think I shall ever get well?"

"Indeed I hope you will; but why ask that question?"

"Because I feel I shall not live long—I believe I shall soon die—I shall then be laid beside my poor mother—and she will then have her two little boys—one on each side of her. But do not cry, Miss S., I am not afraid to die. You told me, and the Testament tells me, that Christ will suffer little children to come unto him; and though I know I am a very sinful little boy, yet I think I shall be happy, for I love this Saviour who can save such a wicked boy as I am. And I sometimes think I shall soon meet mother and little brother in happiness. I know you will come too, won't you? When I am dead I wish you to tell the Sabbath scholars how much I loved them all—tell them they must all die, and may die soon, and tell them to come and measure the grave of little James; and then prepare to die."

The young lady wept, and could not answer him at that time. But she was enabled to converse with him many times afterwards on the grounds of his hope, and was satisfied that this little lamb was indeed of the fold of Jesus. She was sitting at his bedside, and with her own trembling hand closed his lovely eyes as they shut in the slumbers of death. He fell asleep with a smile, without a struggle. The lady was the only sincere mourner who followed the remains of the child to the grave; and while she shed many tears over that grave which concealed his lovely form, she could not but rejoice in the belief that God had permitted her to be the feeble instrument of preparing an immortal spirit for a mansion in the skies, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.

## PART THIRD.

## THE DUTY AND MOTIVES OF EARLY PIETY.

### A SERMON, BY THE REV. ADAM GUN, A. M.,

OF THE ESTABLISHED SCOTCH CHURCH, GLASGOW.

*"Early will I seek thee."*—Ps. lxxiii. 1.

You know, little children, who spake these words. It was David, the king of Israel. Though he was a great king, and had many things to occupy his attention, he yet considered God to be the chief object of his desire. He could not be happy without God. But you know the Lord is a great God, and to be feared and had in reverence of all that draw near unto him; and, therefore, you must seek God through the Lord Jesus Christ. When John the Baptist saw Jesus, he pointed him out to his disciples as the "Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." John i. 29. 36. And when his disciples heard this, they followed Jesus. Jesus turned and saw them following him, and said unto them, (v. 38,) "What seek ye?" Now, David and John's disciples were seeking the same thing; for sinners, as we are, cannot approach the glorious presence of Jehovah but as he is revealed in the Saviour.

Some of you little children may be inclined to ask,

I. *Why* you should seek Christ?

You know that the Lord Jesus Christ is a very glorious Being. He is adorned with all the perfections of God. He is the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. He is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person. He is called in Scripture "the pearl of great price"—that is, nothing is so valuable in heaven or earth, as to be compared with Jesus. He is God's "unspeakable gift," and men or angels cannot rehearse his excellencies. He is "the day-star from on high, and the Sun of righteousness," from whom proceed light and warmth, and every comfort and blessing.

And what are some of those blessings which God is ready to bestow on those who seek Christ?

1. The pardon of sin.

Every one of us, young and old, needs to have his ini-

quities blotted out. The word of God informs us that we are born in sin, and brought forth in iniquity; we are the children of wrath, and liable to destruction. You know that when God destroyed the people of the old world, because their wickedness was great on the face of the earth, little children like you were drowned, along with their parents and friends; and this shows us that little children are sinners as well as others; for God, who is a just God, would not punish them if they were not guilty. And if you think on your own hearts, and consider your own conduct, do you not feel that you do many things which are wrong? Have you not been thinking your own thoughts, and speaking your own words, and doing your own works on this holy Sabbath? This is sin, and you need to be forgiven your iniquity. How much should you and I desire to obtain the happiness of which David speaks in the 32d psalm! "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile."

We can do nothing for ourselves. I will tell you a story about the Rev. David Dickson, a good minister, that was once in Edinburgh. Being asked, when on his death-bed, how he found himself, he answered, "I have taken my good deeds and bad deeds, and thrown them together in a heap, and fled from them both to Christ, and in him I have peace." He felt that he could do nothing for himself. When he inquired, like the prophet Micah, (vi. 6, 7,) "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"—he found that none of these things could be of any avail. "There is no name given under heaven among men by which we can be saved, but the name of Christ." I read lately of a certain man on the Malabar coast, who had inquired of various devotees and priests, how he might make atonement for his sins; and he was directed to drive iron spikes, sufficiently blunted, through his sandals, and on these spikes he was directed to place his naked feet, and to walk about 480 miles. If, through loss of blood,

or weakness of body, he was obliged to halt, he might wait for healing and strength. He undertook the journey, (for what will not a person awakened to a sense of sin attempt, to get rid of the burden of it,) and while he halted under a large shady tree, where the gospel was sometimes preached, one of the missionaries came and preached in his hearing, from these words: "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." While he was preaching, the man rose up, threw off his torturing sandals, and cried out aloud, "This is what I want;" and he became a lively witness that the blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin. And, little children, what peace, and comfort, and hope, and joy, does it produce in the mind, even in the most distressing circumstances! I have read about a dying soldier and a dying officer. The soldier was wounded at the battle of Waterloo, and carried by his companion to some distance, and laid down at the foot of a tree, where his companion, at his request, read to him a few verses of the Bible, upon which he said, "I die happy, for I possess the peace of God, which passeth all understanding." A little while after, one of the officers passed him, and, seeing him in a very exhausted state, asked him how he did. He answered him as he said formerly to his companion, and then expired. The officer was soon after mortally wounded, and when surrounded by his brother officers, full of anguish and dismay, he cried out, "O! I would give ten thousand worlds that I possessed that peace which gladdened the heart of the dying soldier whom I saw lying under the tree. I know nothing of this peace! I die miserable! for I die in despair!"

Now, little children, you must seek Jesus, that you may have your sins forgiven, and that you may live at peace with God, and die in safety and in happiness.

2. Another blessing which Christ gives, and for which you should seek him, is *holiness*.

You know, little children, that God is "glorious in holiness," and that he says to each of us, "O do not that abominable thing which my soul hateth!" We are in his sight "altogether as an unclean thing." Our hearts are full of malice, and pride, and impurity. We require that God would create in us a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within us. Now, Christ cleanseth the souls of those that come to the fountain which has been opened for sin and

uncleanness; and his Holy Spirit is sent to sanctify the soul. The people of God who, like the Corinthians, have been "washed, and justified, and sanctified, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the Spirit of our God," are able to sing "unto Him that loved us, and hath washed us from our sins in his own blood." When a person is brought, like the apostle Paul, to glory in nothing but in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, the world is thereby crucified unto him, and he is crucified unto the world. I will tell you a story on this subject. Mr. Marshall, author of the "Gospel Mystery of Sanctification," having been for several years under distress of mind, consulted Dr. Goodwin, an eminent divine, giving him an account of the state of his soul, and particularizing his sins, which lay heavy on his conscience. In reply, he told him he had forgot to mention the greatest sin of all—the sin of unbelief, in not believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, for the remission of his sins, and for sanctifying his nature. On this, he set himself to the studying and preaching Christ, and attained to eminent holiness, great peace of conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

If you, little children, wish to be made holy, as God is holy, that God may have pleasure in seeing you, as olive plants trained up beside the water courses, you must seek Christ, and wait on him for his Spirit, to sprinkle you with his peace-speaking and purifying blood. You have great need of being made holy, and it is a difficult thing to make you holy. You know it is a difficult thing to break the hard flinty rock. Now your hearts are compared, in Scripture, to the adamant and to the nether millstone; and the more holy you become, the more you will feel your want of holiness. I will tell you what Mr. Newton, an excellent minister, once said when reading the text, "By the grace of God, I am what I am." He said, "I am not what I *ought* to be. Ah! how imperfect and deficient! I am not what I *wish* to be; but I abhor what is evil, and would cleave to that which is good! I am not what I *hope* to be; soon, soon I shall put off mortality, and with it all sin and imperfection. Yet, though I am not what I *ought* to be, nor what I *wish* to be, nor what I *hope* to be, I can truly say I am *not what* I *once was*—a slave to sin and Satan; and I can heartily join with the apostle, and acknowledge, 'By the grace of God, I am what I am!'"

3. The only other blessing which I shall now mention, that you shall get by seeking Christ, is, *eternal life* in heaven.

It is said, in one of the psalms, "The Lord is a sun and shield; he will give grace and glory." He gives grace here, in forgiving the sins of those who seek him, and, by the power of his grace, he subdues sin in the soul; and he will give glory hereafter, in bringing every one of those, whom he pardons and purifies, to heaven, to be ever in the presence and enjoying the favour of God. He is saying to you now, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and my daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." You know that Moses, though adopted into the family of Pharoah's daughter, and exalted to the honours of Pharoah's kingdom, preferred joining himself to the Lord's people, and to suffer affliction with them, than to enjoy all the treasures of Egypt, and all the pleasures of sin for a season, that he might have the dignity of being numbered among the children of God; and we read that he did so because "he had respect to the recompense of reward."

You know, little children, that there are only two places beyond the grave, to one or other of which we must all go. When Christ was on the cross, there were two thieves crucified, one on either side of him; one of them repented of his sins, and applied for help to Christ, saying, "Lord, remember me when thou comest to thy kingdom;" and the Lord answered him graciously: "This night shalt thou be with me in paradise." Had not he felt his sin, and applied to Christ, and obtained mercy, what would have become of him? He would have shared the fate of the impenitent thief, in being abandoned to destruction; as soon as death arrived, he, like the rich man of whom we read, would "lift up his eyes in hell, being in torment," instead of being, like Lazarus, carried to Abraham's bosom by the angels of God.

Little children, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. God is a consuming fire to all who do not seek him in Christ Jesus. The wrath of God abideth on each of us, unless freed from it by Christ. You can know somewhat of the dreadful effects of God's curse. You remember that once Christ, when hungry, passed by a fig-tree, upon which there was no fruit, and Christ cursed

the tree, and it withered away. How terrible if the wrath of Christ should fall on us! You have heard that the devils in hell were once angels in heaven; but, as soon as they sinned against God, his wrath was poured upon them. And, O! what a change took place on them! They were cast into that lake of fire and brimstone, which was then prepared for the devil and his angels, and the wicked people who will not seek Christ to "deliver them from the wrath to come." "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus." A little boy, on his death-bed, was asked where he was going? He answered, to heaven. Being farther asked why he wished to go there? he answered, because Christ is there. And being again asked what he would do if Christ should leave heaven? he replied, I will go with him whithersoever he goeth.

These, my young friends, are gifts worth the seeking, and I hope some of you have been excited to inquire,

II. *How* you are to seek Christ, so as to find him.

1. You must *believe* in Christ: "Without faith it is impossible to please God."

Some of you know the question of the Shorter Catechism. "What is faith in Jesus Christ? Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace whereby we receive and rest upon him alone for salvation, as he is offered to us in the gospel." You must believe all that is said in the Scriptures about Christ, who is "able to save them to the uttermost, who come unto God by him." You must feel your need of Christ, and believe in him to the saving of your souls. I will tell you a very pretty story from which you may learn the nature of faith. "Children," says Cecil, "are capable of very early impressions. I imprinted on my daughter the idea of faith, at a very early age. She was playing one day with a few beads, which seemed wonderfully to delight her. Her whole soul was absorbed in her beads. I said, 'My dear, you have some pretty beads there.' 'Yes, papa.' 'And you seem vastly pleased with them. Well, now, throw them behind the fire.' The tears started into her eyes; she looked earnestly at me, as if she ought to have a reason for so cruel a sacrifice. 'Well, my dear, do as you please: but you know, I never told you to do any thing which I did not think would be for your good.' She looked at me a few moments longer, and then summoning up all her fortitude, her breast heaving with the effort, she

dashed them into the fire. 'Well,' said I, 'there let them lie; you shall hear more about them another time; but I say no more of them now.' Some days after, I bought her a boxful of larger beads, and toys of the same kind. When I returned home, I opened the treasure, and set it before her; she burst into tears with excessive joy. 'These, my child,' said I, 'are yours, because you believed me when I told you to throw these paltry beads behind the fire; your obedience has brought you this treasure. But now, my dear, remember as long as you live, what *faith* is. I did all this to teach you the meaning of faith. You threw your beads away when I bade you, because you had faith in me, that I never advised you but for your good. Put the same trust in God; believe every thing that he says in his word. Whether you understand it or not, have faith in him that he means your good.'"

Now, little children, remember what faith is, and put it in practice; for without faith you cannot be interested in Christ, or have any of the blessings which are treasured up in him.

2. In seeking Christ you must pray to him.

Although God knows what we require, yet that does not supersede the necessity of our imploring the blessing needed by us. God knew what Solomon needed; but he said to him, "Ask what I shall give thee." When the blind beggar, Bartimeus, heard Christ passing by, and he cried, saying, "Thou Son of David, have mercy on me," Christ knew well what he needed, and what he wished; yet he put to him the question, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee." Again, when the children of Israel were in the land of their captivity, God determined that at the end of seventy years they should be restored to their own country; but he said, "yet for all these things I will be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it unto them."

Probably some of you, little children, and some persons who are grown up, may be saying that they cannot pray. This will be no excuse, for God has promised to instruct those who wish to be taught to pray, just as Christ taught his disciples to pray in those interesting words which I hope you all know, and which have been appropriately called the Lord's prayer. "Our Father which art in heaven,"&c., as you will find them recorded in the sixth chapter of Matthew, at the 9th verse. You can easily remember such a

prayer as that offered up by the thief on the cross : "*Lord*, remember me when thou comest to thy kingdom ;" or that of Bartimeus : " Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me ;" or the prayer of the publican, when he went up with the Pharisee to the temple to pray : " God be merciful to me a sinner." I remember a story about a Hottentot who was under deep convictions of sin, and who did not know how to pray, being present at family worship at his master's house, was taught how to pray, by hearing the parable of the Pharisee and the publican read. While the prayer of the Pharisee was read, the poor Hottentot thought within himself, "This is a *good* man ; here is nothing for me ;" but when the master came to the prayer of the publican—"God be merciful to me a sinner"—" This suits me," he cried ; " now I know how to pray ;" and he continued to put up that prayer until he found mercy. Prayer is the key to heaven. By it Elijah shut up the skies ; so that there was neither dew nor rain on the land for a long space of time. By prayer Jacob placed a ladder whose foot was on earth, and its top in heaven, upon which the angels of God ascended and descended. By prayer Daniel shut the lions' mouths, so that they could not hurt him when he was cast into their den. By prayer Samson shook the Philistines' temple, and destroyed the idolaters it contained. By prayer Peter was delivered from prison, for the church interceded with God for him, and the angel of the Lord was sent to rescue him from his perilous situation. " Pray, therefore, without ceasing."

3. You must seek Christ by studying the Bible, and by hearing the gospel preached.

The Bible is God's book. It tells us of God and of Christ, and of every thing which we have to do. You know that the apostle Paul commended Timothy in that, " from a child he knew the Scriptures, which are able to make wise unto salvation, through faith that is in Christ Jesus." I will tell a story about an Irish boy who loved the Scriptures. He was one day going to one of the Bible schools, that is, a school where they are taught to read and to understand the Bible, for in many schools in Ireland they are not taught to read the Bible ; and in many schools in this country, they are not taught to understand it, although they may be able to read it. On his way to school, he was met by a Popish priest who was not so averse to the Scrip-

tures as most of his brethren are. The priest asked the boy, what book it was which he carried under his arm? "It is a will, sir," said the boy. "What will," rejoined the priest. "The last will and testament that Jesus Christ left to me, and to all who desire to claim a title to the property therein bequeathed," replied the boy. "What did Christ leave you in that will?" "A kingdom, sir." "Where does that kingdom lie?" "It is the kingdom of heaven, sir." "And do you expect to reign as a king there?" "Yes, sir, as joint-heir with Christ." "And will not every person get there as well as you?" "No, sir, none can get there but those that claim their title to that kingdom on the ground of this will." The priest asked several other questions, to which the boy gave such satisfactory answers as quite astonished him. "Indeed," said he, "you are a good little boy: take care of the book wherein God gives you such precious promises; believe what he has said, and you will be happy here and hereafter." But when you read the word of God, little children, remember that you cannot understand the wondrous things of God's law until your eyes are opened by the Spirit of God. You must pray to God for his Spirit to enlighten you in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. You remember, that when Hagar and her son Ishmael were cast out from the house of Abraham, that the child was ready to perish for thirst, and that although there was a well of water near at hand, she knew not of it until the Lord sent his angel to point it out to her. Therefore, you must wait upon God for his Spirit. And when attending the house of God, which you should always do with your parents and friends, you ought to listen to what is said, as if addressed alone to you; and you should be praying for an interest in what is declared by the minister from the Bible. The next story should instruct you how to act when listening to what is preached. A little girl once heard a minister preaching from the text, "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; He shall gather the lambs with his arms, and carry them in his bosom." Isaiah xl. 11. And when asked about the sermon, she said that she was wishing all the time the minister was preaching, that she was one of Christ's lambs. Mr. Patison, the minister, said to her, "What a happy day it would be in Bristo Street, had all my hearers been employed in a similar manner."

This is the way you are to seek Christ—by faith, by prayer, by reading and hearing God's blessed word. And, O! little children, what a privilege have you in having such excellent teachers to inform you how you are to seek Christ! But, probably, some of you little children are thinking that you are too young to seek Christ, and that it will be time enough to seek him when you get older. And this leads me to consider briefly,

III. The *advantage* of *seeking* Him *early*.

1. If Christ is worthy that you should seek him at all, the sooner you do so the better. And you are to seek him while he is to be found, and call on him while near. He is as deserving *now* as ever he was, or as he shall be at any future time. And "*now* is the accepted time." "To day," saith the Lord, "if ye will hear my voice, harden not your hearts." A time may come when he shall not be found though sought. You have heard of the foolish virgins, that when the Bridegroom came they were not ready to go with him into heaven, though earnestly wishing to get admission there. And you remember what is told us of Esau, that in consequence of having sold his birth-right, the blessing was also denied him, although he earnestly sought it with tears. Your hearts are more tender now than they will be after they are "hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." Delay is dangerous. Felix, when Paul reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, trembled, and answered, "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee;" but *this* expected time never arrived. And you know the history of the young ruler, who came to Christ, saying, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" When he heard that he must leave all, and follow Christ, "he went away sorrowful, for he was very rich"—thus proving that "the love of money is the root of all evil;" and that "it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God;" and that we should seek Christ before the mind is fully occupied with other things, which will not easily be dislodged. Therefore, you must seek him early. But,

2. Another reason for seeking him early is, that you may die very soon, and if you have found Christ, your friends will be comforted.

Do you know, little children, that about one-third of all

the children born, die in infancy. Now, if you do not seek Christ and find him before you die, you cannot go to heaven. I remember reading a story about a little girl at Portsea, who died at nine years of age; and one day in her illness, she said to her aunt, with whom she lived, "When I am dead, I should like Mr. Griffin to preach a sermon to children, to persuade them to love Jesus Christ, to obey their parents, not to tell lies, but to think about dying and going to heaven." "I have been thinking," said she, "what text I should like him to preach from—2d Kings iv. 26. You are the Shunamite, Mr. G. is the prophet, and I am the Shunamite's child. When I am dead, I dare say you will be grieved, though you need not. The prophet will come to see you, and when he says, 'How is it with the child?' you may say, 'It is well.' I am sure it will then be well with me, for I shall be in heaven, singing the praises of God. You ought to think it well, too." Mr. G. accordingly fulfilled the wish of this pious child. And, children, if you die early, after seeking and finding Christ, how happy will your friends whom you have left behind be, in the assurance of your being blessed in heaven! There was once an infidel and profligate youth, who had disregarded the pious injunctions of his parents, but who one day went to hear a sermon with them. The subject of discourse was, *the heavenly state;* the nature of the happiness, employment, and company of the spirits of just men made perfect, were beautifully and affectingly described. While the whole congregation were in ecstacy, the parents of this youth were in tears. When they came home, the son asked why they were sad during sermon, as they were known to be good people. The mother answered, that her sorrow arose from the fear, that the son of her womb and of her vows should be banished at last from the celestial paradise. This cautious admonition, sanctioned by the father, found its way to the youthful heart of her child, and issued in his conversion.

3. The only other reason I will urge for your seeking Christ early, is, the increase of happiness here and hereafter, which will be thereby secured to you.

I never read of any one that repented of seeking Christ too early. You are to come to Christ for happiness. God says that "wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." God's favour is life, and his lov-

ing-kindness is better than life. Some people would lead you to think otherwise than the word of God says of a religious life. Matthew Henry, the author of the excellent commentary on the Bible, left this as his dying testimony, "that a life spent in the service of God, and communion with him, is the most comfortable and pleasant life that any one can live in the world." You know, little children, that sin is the cause of all the misery in the world; and that if you seek Christ early, you will be kept from many sins into which those who seek not Christ are liable to fall, and which, when set in order before them afterwards, will force these to say, "a man may bear his infirmities, but a wounded spirit, who can bear?" And the longer you have received Christ, and the greater your advances in the divine life, the more "meet will you be for the inheritance of the saints in light." The higher degree of glory you will be capable of receiving. We are told in the fifteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians, that "there is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars, for one star differeth from another star in glory;" thus intimating, that he who soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly, while he who soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully." Though all the inhabitants of heaven will be happy, we are taught to believe, that there will be companies of the redeemed encircling the throne of God at a nearer and at a more remote distance; that by divine appointment the station on high will be assigned according to the progress now made in conformity to the divine image; that Abraham the father of the faithful, and David the man according to God's own heart, and John the beloved disciple of our Lord, and such as have been long in Christ, will be placed in a more advantageous position than the thief on the cross and such like, whose conversion was instantly succeeded by his introduction to the paradise above; and that as they were here advancing from grace to grace, they shall, in a progressive ratio, be moving forward incalculably from glory to glory.

# No. VIII.

## INFLUENCE OF A PRAYING MOTHER.

THE Bible begins the story of the Redeemer's mercy; but it is only a beginning. The whole history of redemption can never be said to be published, till every name on the pages of the book of life has been read, and the leadings of God's mysterious providence, in regard to each one, have been unfolded in eternity.

Dr. Johnson has somewhere said, that the memoir of *any* man, properly written, could not fail of being useful and interesting. This remark, I am confident, is correct, and especially so, when applied to the history of a redeemed sinner. And I have sometimes thought it might form a part of the employment of heaven, to receive from the lips of each glorified spirit a history of his life on earth; especially that part of it which relates to his conversion and sanctification; and as these histories are more and more known, so much louder and sweeter will be the song, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty." My own views of the wisdom and mercy of the Saviour have frequently been greatly elevated by hearing individuals relate the dealings of God towards them. And I trust it will be so with the reader of the brief narrative which I am about to present to him.

A few years since I was called from my study to see a stranger. He brought a letter from a friend in Ohio, which stated that he was "a man of the right stamp." His name was JOSEPH W. BARR, then a student at the Theological Seminary at Andover. He was out of health; had walked nearly thirty miles; and there was nothing very prepossessing in his first appearance. But a few hours' acquaintance only was necessary to discover that he was a man of a strong, well-balanced mind, of deep piety, and of a breast full of benevolence. One great object of his visit was to

restore his health, which had become impaired by study. But instead of lying upon the couch, taking gentle exercise, and "light medicines," he hired himself out, for the vacation, as a carpenter; and a better, or more diligent and faithful workman, seldom entered the shop. He received high wages, and the family in which he resided can hardly speak of him, to this day, without tears. On leaving us, he carried away a good stock of health; and more of the heart and good wishes, and pure substantial tokens of confidence from his Christian friends, than if he had spent his time in any other way. While in my study, one evening, I requested him to relate to me his Christian experience, and the dealings of God in regard to his soul. He began at once, and did it with such simplicity and humility that I was compelled more than once to turn away my head to conceal my tears. I wrote down the account just as he had related it, as soon as he had left me. It is not merely a true account of his conversion, but, as nearly as possible, in his own words:

Among my first recollections is the image of my sainted mother. We lived at the West, in what was then a howling wilderness, but is now the flourishing state of Ohio. My father was a minister and a missionary, and my mother was every way qualified to be his helper. My father was gone much from home in searching for the scattered sheep of Christ's fold, and could not do much towards forming my character. But my mother! she was an angel to me. We lived in a log house, and had but one large room; of course she had no closet there. But there was a beautiful grove a little back of the house, and there, as early as I can remember any thing, I can remember that she took me by the hand and caused me to kneel by her side, while she prayed aloud for my absent father and for me. At first I hardly understood it; but soon learned that God, who dwelt far, far above those high trees, could hear her prayer, and was hearkening to her sweet voice. She used statedly to lead me there, and always laid her right hand on my head while she prayed; and feelings of deep awe always came over me. She never omitted this practice while she lived; and I there had distinct and correct impressions made as to my character, as well as to the character of God.

She died when I was nine years old, and was buried near by. During the most giddy and wicked period of my

life, I could never forget these impressions. The grove is cut down now, but the spot seems a hallowed spot. Even since the grove has been gone, and since my mother's grave has become level with the surrounding ground, I have stood on this spot, and her meek image seemed to be before me, and her voice, tremulous with feeling, seemed to come again to my ears; and I have paused there in tears, chained by a remembrance of her faithfulness and her love. No legacy could she have left me half so precious, nor could her features have been more vividly and accurately left upon canvass, than they are upon my memory.

Many years after my mother's death, I was in the hey-day of youth, and in a course of sin truly dreadful. The restraints of conscience were broken, and there was little that could or did check me, except my early education. My mother had died when I was a mere child, and my father was too far off to reach me otherwise than by his prayers. I well remember many seasons of deep conviction for sin, but which my stubborn heart resisted or stifled. One night at a ball, whither I went, as I should then have said, for rational and innocent amusement, my conscience was suddenly startled.

I was introduced to a young lady for my partner who came from a distant section of the country. After the dance, in which we were partners, I entered into conversation with her respecting the place from which she came. She gave me many interesting particulars of that then newly-settled place, and among other things mentioned the late sickness of her father, and the many continued kindnesses and attentions of a Mr. Barr, a missionary; stating that Mr. Barr had been to see her father very frequently, and that she felt much attached to him. She knew not my name. I replied, that "Mr. Barr, the missionary, is my father." She started as from an adder. "Your father! *he* your father! *what would he say if he knew you were here!*" Had a dagger been thrust into me, I could not have felt the wound more deeply. It spoiled the evening for me. It ruined my peace; and, though I know not that it can be said to have been the means of my awakening from the sleep of sin, yet I am confident it planted a thorn in my conscience, which was not taken out till I had bowed to God with a broken heart. The giving and receiving of this keen reproof were both, as it were,

involuntary, and show that neither of our consciences could approve of the employment of that evening, if allowed to speak out without restraint.

A few days after the ball, I was present at a communion. At the table many of my near friends were found. The scene before me, and the thoughts of a future, eternal separation, affected me greatly. The sermon, too, reached my conscience; and I might, at the close of the services, be said to have been under strong convictions for sin. The same day a very devoted Christian was accidentally, or rather providentially, thrown in my way. He began to address me on the subject of my salvation, without knowing any thing of my previous history, or the state of my feelings at that time. Then my heart began to rise with a strength of bitterness which I never knew before. I reproached him, pointing to the inconsistencies in the church; raved like a madman; and, while my conscience was grinding me like a millstone, I still kept pouring out my invectives. He bore it all with meekness, perfectly unmoved, and, by his gentleness, held up a shield which caused every dart I threw to recoil upon myself. His Christian meekness was too much for me; I rose up in wrath and left him. Had he given only *one* retort—shown *one* angry feeling, it would have relieved me; but no, I could find no handle. I went out into the woods, smarting under the wounds which I had been giving myself; and when I could stand under it no longer, I returned—told my Christian friend my situation and feelings, asked his pardon, and begged his prayers. Truly, as Henry Martyn beautifully says, "And this also I learned, *that the power of gentleness is irresistible.*"

I had now been under deep and pungent convictions for sin for more than three weeks. I could not pray. I could not feel sorry for sin, nor hate it, except as it must bring me to unspeakable ruin. There seemed to be no mercy for me. The heavens were brass, the earth was iron, and I was fast preparing to look up and curse God. Perfectly sensible of my situation, perfectly convinced that I deserved hell, I could not feel regret or humbled. Every feeling of my soul was deep, awakened enmity to the character and government of God.

At length, after struggling with the terrified conscience and the stirrings of the Spirit of God, *I determined to take my own life.* It was not the result of a paroxysm of

despair, but the cool, deliberate determination of one who dares throw himself upon the thick bosses of the Almighty's buckler.

After coming to this determination, I selected my time and place. Not far from me was a considerable waterfall; thither I went, one beautiful morning, fully resolved to return no more. The waters, dark and deep, gathered themselves together in a narrow channel, and after whirling around several times, as if recoiling from the plunge, they rushed headlong over a time-worn rock, and fell forty feet or more into a large basin beneath. On that rock I placed myself, prepared to do the deed. I looked down into the great basin, forty feet below me, and there the falling waters were boiling and foaming up, as if indignant at being thus cast down—fit emblem, I thought, of the helpless raging of the wicked in the world of despair. *But I will now know the worst which God can inflict upon me. I will plunge in, and in five minutes I shall* KNOW *what hell is, and what is to be my situation for eternity!*

I drew myself back to take the plunge. There was no faltering—no shaking of a single muscle—no sensation of fear. But just as I was in the act of leaping, the hand of Omnipotence seemed to be laid suddenly upon me. Every nerve seemed to be paralyzed, and every bodily function to fail. A cold shivering came over me, and I had not the strength of a child. I turned my face away; the beautiful sun was shining, and for the *first* time a voice, like that of my departed mother's, seemed to say, "*Perhaps there may yet be mercy for you.*" "*Yes,*" I replied, "*I will seek it till God takes my life!*" And there, and on the very spot where I was about to consign soul and body over to endless misery, there the mercy of God found me, and there the first ray of hope visited me. O! I can never think of this temptation without feeling that I have been near the pit; and that man, if left by God, will quickly destroy both soul and body.

Before closing this narrative I will add, that this interesting young man lived the life of devoted, consistent, ardent piety. He completed his education, and devoted himself as a missionary to Africa. He was all ready to depart—had taken farewell of his friends, and was, as I believe, on his way to the ship which was to convey him to Africa. He arrived at Richmond, Va., on Saturday night, and was

to have preached the next day; but about midnight he was seized with the cholera, (of which he was the first and only victim in that city,) and after twelve hours passed in indescribable pain, he calmly and sweetly fell into the arms of God's messenger, and was carried to that glorious assembly where the praying mother, we doubt not, welcomed to her everlasting embrace the child of so many prayers.

How mysterious are the ways of God! He raises up pious friends, and leads them to labour, and pray, and go down to the grave, without seeing any good fruit from the plants which they nourish and water with prayers and tears. But, long after they are gone, their prayers are answered and their labours blest. Let no praying mother doubt that her prayers will finally be answered. He is mysterious, too, in that he raises up instruments apparently fitted for great usefulness, and then cuts them off just when they promise to be most useful. But his own glorious plans will go on, and he will raise up others to take the places of those who are dead. All shall be for the glory of God. O! the blessedness of belonging to a kingdom which cannot be injured by any changes among such beings as we are. Reader! if you belong to this kingdom, be up, be doing, be vigilant, be faithful. Your crown is near; it is sure. If you do not belong to this kingdom, come at once and give yourself to the work of serving God. Repent of all sin, forsake all sin, and that same Redeemer who saved the dear youth of whom I have been speaking, shall be yours. J. T.

# No. IX.

## A PLEA FOR CHINA.

BY MARCUS E. CROSS.

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### PART FIRST.

Few Pagan lands, at this moment, are viewed with deeper interest by Christians who feel the importance of converting the world to God, than the empire of *China*. Its immense territory; its teeming millions of souls; the doors which seem to be opening for the introduction of the gospel; its present degraded condition: are all topics calculated to awaken an intense interest in the minds of all interested in the cause of *missions*.

In offering a few thoughts respecting the condition of China, I propose, in the first place, to take a brief survey of its dark and degraded condition; and, secondly, to contemplate some of the lighter or brighter shades in the picture of its condition, as affording ground of encouragement for increased effort in that field.

I. In order to secure a view of its dark and degraded condition, I would contemplate,

1. Some of the general features of the government and policy of the empire.
2. Its social state, and
3. Refer to its religious and moral condition.

1. Then I am to speak of the government of China. But as preliminary to this, it is important to know something of the extent and population of the celestial *empire*. China proper extends from the great wall* on the north,

* The Chinese wall was erected during the fourth dynasty of China, called Tsin, which commenced two hundred years before the Christian era. Almost every third man was drafted throughout the empire, for the accomplishment of this undertaking; and being but poorly supplied

which separates it from Chinese Tartary to the Chinese Sea, about 1300 miles; and about the same distance from the Pacific ocean on the east, to the frontiers of Thibet on the west. The territories of the empire embrace Thibet, Manshuria, Mongolia proper, and the whole of Central Asia between Hindostan and Asiatic Russia. The Chinese empire, including the tributary states, and those under its protection, consists of about 5,250,000 square miles. According to the census taken in 1813, under the authority of the emperor Kea-king, the official returns carried the population of China up to 362,447,183 souls. (See En. of Religious Knowledge, p. 1208). Dr. Morrison's estimate was, however, 150,000,000; that of his son 360,000,000. Lord Macartney states the number at 333,000,000. It is probable, the first mentioned is the most accurate estimate. Thus we have, in this one empire, nearly one-tenth part of the habitable globe, and more than one-third of the human population. What immense tides of immortal life are constantly sweeping over this territory into the ocean of eternity! The subjects of the Macedonian were but as a handful compared with the teeming millions of China. The Roman empire, when at its greatest extent, numbered not more than one-third of the present population of China; and the throne of the Cesars was, in the power it conferred on its occupant, but as a child's elevation, in comparison with that on which the Tartar sits.

The government of China is an absolute monarchy. The emperor is the great and supreme *patriarch*. His titles are, the "Son of Heaven," and the "Ten Thousand Years." Ubiquity, or omnipresence, is considered as among his attributes; temples are erected to him in every part of the empire; and he is worshipped as a God. He has three wives, of whom only one bears the rank of empress. He resides generally at Pekin; in summer at Techehol. When he appears in public, he is accompanied by 2000

with provisions, many of them died in the work. Hence the Chinese call it "the ruin of one generation, and the salvation of thousands." This wall is a stupendous work, stretching over fifteen hundred miles of country, crossing rivers, lofty mountains, and deep valleys, and provided with gates and towers at certain intervals. In some places to protect exposed passages, it is double and treble. The foundation and corners are of granite, but the principal part is of blue bricks cemented with pure white mortar.

lictors, bearing chains, axes, and other instruments characteristic of eastern *despotism*.

The emperor appoints governors over particular districts, called mandarins. Of these there are estimated to be not less than 14,000 on the civil list. They are divided into nine ranks or *pin*, each of which is indicated by a double badge—the colour of the globe on the apex of the cap, and the embroidery on the front and back of their official robes.

The only check placed on the power of the emperor is that whereby these mandarins and the counsellors make humble remonstrances on the errors of government. The mandarin, when he goes out, is preceded by a hundred executioners, who announce his approach by a kind of yell. Should any person forget to retire to the side of the wall, he is mauled with whips of cords, or rods of *bamboo*. Each mandarin is a kind of despot over his little *province*, and disposes of the lives of his *subjects* at his *pleasure*. The insecurity of life and property in China, is expressed in the following terms by Rev. David Abeel, missionary to south-eastern Asia. "In the present constitution of society, there is scarcely any security for property or life in the empire. Some of the laws are *unjust*, others perverted to the most nefarious purposes. The innocent are made to suffer *for* and *with* the guilty; and the mandarins have it in their power to dispose of those below them at their pleasure. Hence the oppressions and extortions under which the nation has long groaned. Contrary to all the laws of civilized lands, they consider each who might possibly be involved in a crime committed, *guilty*, till he proves his *innocence*. This accounts for that most unreasonable, and, if possible, still more cruel custom of *examining* by *torture*.

"On every occasion they torture by pulling or twisting round the ears, and cause them to kneel a long while on chains. They next employ what they call *the beauty's bar*, (the breast, small of the back, and legs bent up, are fastened to three cross bars, which cause the person to kneel in great pain;) next *the parrot's beam*, (the prisoner is raised from the ground by strings round the fingers and thumbs, suspended from a supple transverse beam;) then *the refining furnace*, (fire applied to the body, and other implements, expressed by other terms.) If these

do not force confession, they double the cruelties till the criminal faints and is restored to life again. Prisoners unable to sustain these agonies, are often compelled to sign a confession of crimes, of which after death many of them are proved guiltless."—(Indo-Chinese Gleaner, vol. i.)

Such briefly is the dark and iron despotism which has been for many centuries swaying its sceptre over this extensive *empire*.

2. Let us turn now to the social condition of China. The systems of morals, as taught by their learned men, embrace many comparatively very good precepts; but when contrasted *with* and tested *by* the *pure* and *perfect* precepts of the *gospel*, they *many* of them appear exceedingly absurd, and *all* very defective; especially if the motives and ends of human conduct be taken into the account.

In their systems of morals we occasionally find a beautiful and useful precept; but there is either error or deficiency in them all. Suppose we take the precepts of the Emperor Kang-he, one of their distinguished moralists; though we admire some of them, yet throughout the whole of the sixteen famous maxims of Kang-he for human conduct, his appeals are *uniformly* to *selfish principles*. It is uniformly the *temporal* interest of the person that is addressed. The fear of punishment, above all, is impressed on the heart.

The following specimens from the "sacred edict," containing the sixteen maxims of Kang-he, will show the correctness of the above statements. (See Edinburgh Review, vol. ii. page 556.) "But every hour impose a dread on yourselves, by thoughts of the three cubit long instrument of punishment. *Fear* the law, and you will not *transgress* it; *dread punishment*, and you will *prevent* it. Wickedness will then gradually vanish; contentions will not then arise; the *simple* being renovated will become *intelligent;* the obstinate being reformed will become meritorious."

The refinement and cultivation of the social affections—the preparation for a higher than *mortal existence*, is not once glanced at. The whole management of a family, as inculcated in these precepts, is more like the subordination of the *camp* than the quiet and confidence of *home*. Domestic comfort is poisoned, indeed, in its *spring*, by the degradation of the female character. After marrying one privileged wife, whom he marries without having seen her, and of course without any previous attachment, a Chinese

may choose as many more of inferior rank as he can maintain. Even this privileged wife is by no means to be the companion, and friend, and helpmate of her husband.

The catalogue of female duties and virtues is thus summed up:

"Women also have their proper work. You must dress the flax, spin the cotton, embroider with the needle, and weave sarsanet, gauze, silk, and grass cloth. Why should you prefer the pearls, gems, gold, and silver which you see some possess? Go and make shoes, stockings, and clothes; and for these you will get money and grain in exchange. Be attentive to your employment, and your thoughts will not hesitate."

The following is a description of a marriage procession in China.

"The bride is carried in a gaudy chair adorned with flowers, and preceded by a lengthened train of attendants, clad in garments of various colours. There are not less than a dozen sedan chairs in the procession, filled with presents to the bride. These constitute her whole marriage dowry. The persons composing the train are hired for the *occasion*. There are large establishments in China provided with men, chairs, and dresses, to be hired out for escorts of this *kind*. The dresses and sedans range through all the degrees of costliness and elegance. Houqua, the rich Hong *merchant*, expended over $50,000 on a daughter's wedding, including the bridal presents. Live geese are always among the presents, and they are carried in the *procession*, being considered, apparently without any good foundation, patterns of concord and fidelity in the married state. The beautiful mandarin *duck* would be a fitter emblem. When the bride reaches the residence of her lord, she is lifted by matrons over a pan of charcoal; a usage the exact import of which is not understood. Various ceremonies follow, which end in the husband unveiling his bride, whom he now sees for the first time; and drinking with her the cup of alliance. A lucky day for the marriage rites is considered important. On this point recourse is had to astrology, and the horoscopes of the parties are diligently compared.

The spring in China is generally preferred for wedding, when the peach tree is in blossom. This circumstance is alluded to in a little poem in the "Book of *Odes*," thus

elegantly paraphrased by the accomplished Sir William Jones:

Sweet child of spring, the garden's queen,
Yon peach tree charms the roving sight;
Its fragrant leaves how richly green—
Its blossoms how divinely bright!

So softly shines the beauteous bride,
By love and conscious virtue led
O'er her new mansion to preside,
And placid joys around her shed."*

From the best information which can be obtained, there cannot be a doubt but what *infanticide* prevails to a considerable extent in China.

Mr. Abeel thus remarks: "Female infanticide we have reason to believe is very common. It is thought by some of the best Chinese scholars to be greatly *increased*, if it were not *produced* by their philosophical notions respecting the origin and continuance of all things. There are two powers of nature according to their books, on the regular action of which the harmony of the universe, both physical and moral, depends. Excess or defect in either power deranges the system of nature, and introduces disorder in the affairs of the world. The one of them they consider to be of the masculine gender, the other of the feminine, and the difference between the two they suppose as great as between the 'vis mobile,' and the 'vis inertia' of the old philosophers."

In the city of Pekin, after allowing more than one-half for natural deaths, the number of exposed infants is, according to Barrow, about four thousand a year.

Some of the scenes he witnessed while at Pekin, were almost incredible. Before the carts go round in the mornings to pick up the bodies of infants thrown in the streets, amounting to about four-and-twenty every night, dogs and swine are let loose upon them. The bodies of those found are carried to a common pit without the city walls, in which the living and the dead are thrown together.

In some provinces, not one out of three is suffered to live; and in others, as Mr. Abeel was informed, the difference

* A Peep at China, p. 78.

between the male and the female population, is as one to ten.

"The most prevalent mode of effecting this crime is by suffocation, which is done by means of a piece of paper, dipped in vinegar, laid over the face of the child, so as to prevent it from breathing, either by means of its mouth or nostrils. It is said to be frequently done to the aged and afflicted, to cut the brittle thread of life."*

The generality of Chinese ladies cannot boast of great beauty. We may judge something respecting their intelligence and good taste from their considering it the highest personal attraction to have a small foot. In what circumstances this practice originated, is not known. The distortion is produced by turning the toes under the soles of the feet at birth; and confining them in that position by tight bandages, till their growth is effectually *checked*. The bandage is continued for several years, during which the poor child suffers the most *excruciating* tortures.

Few causes exert a more powerful influence on the character of nations than woman. It is the female world that chiefly cements society together, and communicates the glow of kindly feeling and reciprocal affection. Their natural regard and sympathy for the other sex, incline them to its society, draw it into theirs; and by promoting the desire to please, contribute to increase the anxiety and attachment of men to each other as well as to themselves. They foster and inculcate the amiable sensibilities, and give a perpetual popularity to the gentle and obliging disposition, to that softened state of mind and manners, which is peculiarly efficacious in regulating the energies of human society. The virtues and qualities, which most adorn the human character, are most natural to the female nature in all ages, but less so to the male after the age of infancy. Hence domestic felicity, and the pleasurable intercourse of society; hence the sum total of the happiness of nations, will be increased proportionately to the cultivation of the female mind. Where woman is cultivated, intelligent, refined, and virtuous, there *must* be a good state of society.

This position seems to be fortified with every view we can take of it.

* Indo-Chinese Gleaner, vol. iii. p. 193.

"Just as the twig is bent the tree's inclined."

But who bends the twig? Who has the mind and character in hand, while it is yet so flexible that it can be turned in any direction and moulded into any shape? It is woman—it is the mother who is the guardian angel in forming the character during this interesting *period.*

What is the report of biography and facts on this subject?

In far-gone times look into the biography of Polycarp, Justin, Gregory, and others of the fathers; look at the childhood of our own immortal Edwards, Dwight, Payson, Mills, and the whole phalanx of those who, at home and abroad, are at this day owned and hailed as the champions of truth and benevolence; and you will find them all, without exception, to have been the sons of pious and intelligent mothers. The father of our country, Washington, felt that he owed to his mother much of what placed him so high both in the cabinet and in the *field.*

Napoleon, in the zenith of his glory, is said often to have owned how much of what was brilliant in his character he derived from his mother. Pagan Rome, herself, understood the pre-eminent power of female influence. In the days of her greatest splendour, there stood on one of her seven hills a temple dedicated to "female fortune," and over its magnificent portal was written the name of Volumnia, for whose honour the temple had been built, to perpetuate her memory who had saved Rome by her influence over her son. Not far distant from it arose a column on which was inscribed, "Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi," in acknowledgment of her worth as the mother of two sons whom she had trained up to be ornaments and defenders of her nation.

In order to show the bearing of these remarks, we will turn again to the degraded condition of woman in China.

The marriage contract is there very imperfectly understood, not usually entered into by the *parties*, but arranged according to the caprice of the *parents.* Among the peasantry, all the heavy labour and drudgery falls upon the women; and they are often to be seen with an infant upon their backs, yoked with an ass, dragging the plough or the

harrow, while the husband indolently directs it, or idles away his time in smoking and gambling.*

The following description, on the authority of the Chinese Repository, gives a graphic sketch of the condition of females in China.

*Pan-hwuy-pan*, who is much admired as a historian, composed a book of instructions for her own sex, in which she treats of their proper station in society, the deportment they should exhibit, and the duties they ought to perform. She teaches them that they "hold the lowest rank among mankind, and that employments the least honourable ought to be, and in fact are their lot." She inculcates entire submission to their husbands, and tells them in very plain terms that they ought to become abject slaves in order to be good wives. We cannot expect that these doctrines, inculcated as they are by a *lady*, who ought to advocate the cause of her sex, and by one held in so high repute as is *Pan-hwuy-pan*, will be overlooked by the "lords of creation;" especially as they accord so perfectly with their domineering disposition in China.

Confucius, the prince of letters, *divorced his wife without assigning any cause for doing it;* and his followers have invariably adopted similar arbitrary measures in their treatment of the weaker sex. The price which is paid to the parents of the bride constitutes her at once a saleable commodity, and causes her to be regarded as differing little from a mere slave. In the choice of a partner for life she acts only a passive part. She is carried to the house of the bridegroom, and there disposed of for life by her parents.

The birth of a female is a matter of grief in China. The father and mother, who had ardently hoped, in the unborn babe, to embrace a son, feel disappointed at the sight of a wretched daughter. Many vows and offerings are made before their idols in order to propitiate their favour and secure the birth of a son. The mercy of the compassionate Kwan-yin, especially, is implored to obtain this precious gift; but after they have spent large sums of money in this pious work, the inexorable goddess fills the house with mourning at the birth of a daughter. "Anciently," says Pan-hwuy-pan, "the female infant was thrown upon

* Encyclopedia Americana, vol. iii. p. 146.

some old rags by the side of its mother's bed, and for three days was scarcely spoken or thought of. At the end of that time it was carried to the temple by the father, accompanied by attendants with brick and tiles in their hands." "The bricks, and tiles," says Pan-hwuy-pan in her comment on these facts, "signify the contempt and suffering which are to be her companions and her portion. Bricks are of no use except to form enclosures and *to be trodden under foot;* and the tiles are useless except when they are *exposed to the injuries* of the air." The *Sheking*, one of the venerated ancient books, says,

> "———When a daughter is born
> She sleeps on the ground.
> She is clothed with a wrapper.
> She plays with a tile.
> She is incapable either of evil or good."

This last assertion is explained thus: "If she does ill, she is not a woman; and if she does well, she is not a woman; a slavish submission is her duty and her highest praise." At the present day, as well as anciently, the female infant is often an object of disgust to its parents and of contempt to all the inmates of the family. As she grows up, her feet are so confined and cramped that they can never exceed the size of infancy, and render it impossible for her ever to walk with ease or safety. Small feet, that badge of bondage, which deprives them of the power of locomotion, confines them to the inner apartments, except when poverty forces them to earn their livelihood abroad by labour, which they render exceedingly difficult and painful.

Females of the higher class seldom leave the house, except in sedan chairs. Their lives are but an honourable captivity. They have few or no real enjoyments; are ignorant of almost every thing—very few of them being able to read; and live and die little more than mere ciphers in human society. Pale and emaciated, these spend the greater part of their lives in embellishing their persons; while females of the poorer classes, whose feet are necessarily permitted to grow to the size which the God of nature designed, perform all the drudgery of husbandry and other kinds of work. These last are in general very industrious, and prove to be helpmates to their husbands. Being remarkable for their good and sound understandings, they manage

their families with a great deal of care and prudence; and so far as industry and economy are concerned they are exemplary mothers. Notwithstanding the degradation in which they are held, they are generally far superior in intellect to the common cast of Asiatic women. They are very ingenious in their needle-work, and the like; and to be a good mother, in the estimation of this class of the Chinese, a woman must be a weaver. But it is to be regretted that they have very little regard for the cleanliness of either their persons or houses. Their children crawl in the dirt, and the few articles of furniture in their dwellings are covered with filth.

Licentiousness, that bane of society, prevails to a lamentable extent in all parts of China. Mr. Gutzlaff remarks, in the journal of his third voyage along the coast; "As soon as we had anchored, numerous boats surrounded us with females on board. I addressed the sailors, and hoped I had prevailed in some degree to curb their evil passions. But, alas! no sooner had I left the deck, than they threw off all restraint; and the disgusting scene that ensued might well have entitled our vessel to the name of *Sodom*. Parents prostituted their daughters, husbands their wives, brothers their sisters; and this they did, not only without remorse, but with *diabolical* joy." This is but a single specimen of the glaring character of their *licentious* customs.

In concluding my remarks on the degradation of woman in China, I would only say:—When we consider that the great mass of Chinese women are not allowed the confidence of their husbands, nor to sit at table with them; nor to have a voice in domestic concerns; nor to visit the temples, where the prayers of the unfortunate are supposed to find access: when the most important injunctions upon them are the following: "Rise; run; work; eat little; spend little; be silent; keep out of sight; obey; bear; and rather bleed, starve, and die, than dare to complain:"—when they are without education; crippled from infancy; closely immured; married without their consent; in some instances even sold by their parents; when, I say, we take into the account all these things, what must, from the nature of the case, be the degraded condition of Chinese society? When the rising generation, when the budding intellects of the young are committed to such hands, how luxuriant

must be the soil for producing all the desolating fruits of *idolatry!*

Such is the social condition of that country which the deluded people *themselves* denominate "the flowery nation"—"the region of eternal summer"—"the land of the sages"—"the celestial empire!"—Such is the condition of that people who think themselves as pleasantly situated as the following soliloquy by Teen Ke-shih represents:—"I felicitate myself," says he, "that I was born in China; and constantly think how very different it would have been with me if born beyond the seas, in some remote part of the earth, where the people, deprived of the converting maxims of the ancient kings, and ignorant of the domestic relations, are clothed with the leaves of plants, eat wood, dwell in the wilderness, and live in the holes of the earth; though, living in such a condition, I should not have been different from the beasts of the field. But now, happily, I have been born in the middle kingdom; I have a house to live in; have food, drink, and elegant furniture; clothing, caps, and infinite blessings; truly, the highest felicity is mine."

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## PART SECOND.

3. We are now to refer to the religious and moral condition of *China.*

The principal religions of China may be comprised in the three following divisions, viz.: the Confucians, the followers of Laou-tsze, and Buddhists.

Some idea can be obtained of these religions from the following *sketches* respecting their founders, and doctrines, furnished by Mr. Medhurst, of the London Missionary Society:—

"Some idea of the different religions may be afforded, by a slight sketch of their respective founders, and of the doctrines promulgated by them. To begin with Confucius; he was born, as has been before observed, in the twenty-first year of Chow Ling-wang, B. C. 549, in the state of Loo, now the province of Shan-tung. His mother had prayed to the hill Ne for a son, and on bringing forth the sage, called his name Chung-ne. Fable says, that on this

occasion, two dragons encircled the house, while sweet music was heard in the air. Confucius was left an orphan at an early age; and during his youth amused himself with marshalling the sacrificial vessels, as opposing armies, or as princes and ministers. As he grew up, he studied the art of ruling; and at the age of fifty was employed by the sovereign of his native state, as magistrate of a small district. Here he instructed the people to nourish their parents while living, and to inter them suitably when dead; he directed the elder and younger to eat separately, and men and women to take different sides of the road; no one picked up what was dropped in the street, and all needless ornament was abolished. Three or four years afterwards, Confucius was raised to the rank of prime minister of Loo. Some improvements took place under his rule; when the prince of a neighbouring state, fearing lest Confucius should acquire too great an influence, sent a band of female musicians to the Loo country, on the acceptance of which by his sovereign, the sage resigned, and left his native province. From this period he wandered from one petty kingdom to another, frequently exposed to the secret machinations and open attacks of foes. During these peregrinations, he taught his disciples under the shade of some tree; and, hurrying about from place to place, was sometimes deprived of the necessaries of life. At length the prince of Tsoo, a southern state, hearing that Confucius was in the neighbourhood, wished to engage him; but one of his own officers remonstrated, saying, that Confucius would never sanction their ambitious views; and that, therefore, it was not for the interests of Tsoo that he should be retained. The prince listened to him, and declined the services of the sage. From thence Confucius retired to his native state, where he did not again solicit office, but employed himself in discoursing on ceremonies, correcting the odes, and adjusting music.

"There are, in the works of this philosopher, some allusions to heaven, as the presiding power of nature; and to fate, as the determiner of all things; but he does not appear to attribute originality to the one, or rationality to the other: and thus his system remains destitute of the main truth, which lies at the basis of all truth, viz., the being of a self-existent, eternal, all-wise God. On one occasion, Confucius exclaimed, 'Unless it be heaven's design that

my cause should fail, what can the people of Kwang do to me?' Again, when one asked him whether it were best to worship this or that deity, he said, 'You are mistaken; he that offends against heaven has no one to whom he can pray.' Another passage runs thus: 'Imperial heaven has no kindred to serve, and will only assist virtue.' The glorious heavens are said to be 'bright, accompanying us wherever we go.' 'When heaven sent down the inferior people, it constituted princes and instructors, directing them to assist the Supreme Ruler in manifesting kindness throughout all regions.' 'Life and death are decreed by fate; riches and poverty rest with heaven.'

"When describing the origin of the world, they talk in the following strain: 'Before heaven and earth were divided, there existed one universal chaos; when the two energies of nature were gradually distinguished, and the yin and yang, or the male and female principles established. Then the purer influences ascended, and became the expansive heavens; while the grosser particles descended, and constituted the subjacent earth. From the combination of these two, all things were produced; and thus heaven is the father, and earth the mother of nature.'

"The principle of the Chinese cosmogony seems to be founded on a sexual system of the universe. That which Linnæus found to exist in plants, the Chinese conceive, pervades universal nature. Heaven and earth, being the grandest objects cognizable to human senses, have been considered by them as the parent of all things, or the superior and inferior principles of being. These they trace to an extreme limit, which possessed in itself the two powers combined. They say that one produced two, two begat four, and four increased to eight; and thus, by spontaneous multiplication, the production of all things followed. To all these existences, whether animate or inanimate, they attach the idea of sex; thus every thing superior presiding, luminous, hard, and unyielding, is of the masculine; while every thing of an opposite quality is ascribed to the feminine gender.

"But it may be asked, have the Confucians no idea of a spirit, and do they not pay divine honours to invisible beings? To this we may reply, that the learned in China talk largely of spirits and demons, but assign them a very inferior place in the scale of existence. Instead of teaching that the Great

Spirit was the former of all things; they hold that spirits are far inferior to the visible and material heavens, and even rank below ancient sages, and modern rulers. Confucius confessed he did not know much about them, and therefore preferred speaking on other subjects. When one of his disciples asked him how he was to serve spiritual beings, he replied, 'not being able to serve men, how can you serve spirits?' And when the disciple continued to inquire about the dead, the sage replied, 'not knowing the state of the living, how can you know the state of the dead?' His universal maxim was, 'Respect the gods, but keep them at a distance;' that is, show them all due honour, but have as little to do with them as possible. It is customary with the Chinese to attach a presiding spirit to each dynasty and kingdom, to the land and grain, to hills and rivers, wind and fire; while the four corners of the house, with the shop, parlour, and kitchen, of every dwelling, are supposed to be under the influence of some tutelary divinity. To these the sage considered it necessary to pay the accustomed honours, but was decidedly averse to what he called flattering the gods by constant services. Dr. Milne says, that 'the word shin should very rarely, if ever, be rendered *god*, in translating from Chinese books; but rather æon, gods, a spirit, an intelligence, &c.' How far it can be proper to express the Christian idea of God by the same term, when writing for the Chinese, remains a question, which has long been agitated, and is yet undecided.

"With regard to a future state of being, the Chinese are as much in the dark as in what relates to the Deity. They speak of the intellectual principle, as distinct from the animal soul; but do not say any thing definitely about its existence after death. The sentence quoted above, shows how the philosopher evaded the question. Some of his followers have talked of three intellectual souls; and seven animal spirits, as attached to each individual; at death, the latter disperse; and of the former, one resides in the grave, the other follows the parental tablet, and the third wanders about like the genii over the mountains; but whether in a state of happiness or misery, the Chinese do not say. In fact, the Confucians do not connect the idea of retribution with the soul, or the invisible world at all: they imagine that all the rewards of virtue and vice, are confined to the present state; and if not dealt out during the lifetime of the

individual, will be visited on his children and grandchildren to the latest generation. The attachment of parents to their offspring, and the desire of perpetuating one's name and estate to future ages, are thus appealed to; but these feelings are far from influencing men to a suitable extent. When, therefore, a Confucian can calculate on escaping immediate infliction, and can harden himself against his posterity, he has nothing to allure him to goodness but the principle of pursuing virtue for its own sake; which, in a corrupt heart, will not carry the individual far.

"Thus, then, we find the far-famed school of Confucius deficient in two important points, the existence of a God, and the interests of the world to come; teaching a lifeless, cold-hearted, uninfluential system, which is powerless in the present, and hopeless for the future world. Of what avail is the parade about the five cardinal virtues and the human relations; when the foundation of all virtue, and the most interesting of all relations, is unknown and neglected? The love of God is a principle which Confucius never broached, and which his disciples, until taught by a better master, cannot understand; while the employments and enjoyments of heaven never entered into their heads to conceive, nor into their hearts to appreciate. Surely, if ever any needed the teaching of the divine Saviour, the sages of China do; and the first lesson they would have to learn in Immanuel's school is humility.

"Before quiting the system of Confucius, it may be well just to allude to the opinion of his followers regarding human nature. The orthodox sentiment on this subject is, that human nature is originally virtuous, and that each individual is born into the world with a good disposition; by intercourse with others, and through the force of example, men become vicious; but the sages, by their instructions, awaken and renovate mankind; when they revert to their original purity. This doctrine has, however, met with its opponents; among the rest, one Kaou-tsze contended that human nature was neither inclined to evil nor good, but might be turned either one way or the other. A conversation between him and a disciple of Confucius is recorded in the Four Books, of which the following is the substance.

"Kaou-tsze said, 'Human nature is like the wood of the willow tree, and righteousness is like a bowl; the getting men to be good, is like

working up the wood into bowls.' Mang-tsze replied, 'Can you turn wood at once into bowls? must you not cut and hack it, in order to form a bowl? and if it be necessary to cut and hack wood, to make a bowl, do you mean to say that we must cut and hack men, in order to render them good? This system of yours is calculated to make men abhor goodness, as contrary to their nature.' Kaou-tsze, not baffled by this reply, renewed his statement under another form, saying, 'Human nature is like water gushing forth; if you turn it to the east, it will flow to the east; and if to the west, it will flow to the west; human nature has no preference for good or evil, just as water has no preference between east and west.' Mang-tsze replied, 'Water has indeed no preference between east and west; but do you mean to say, that it has no choice between up and down? Human nature is good, just as water has a tendency to flow downwards. Men are universally inclined to virtue, just as water invariably flows downwards.' Feeling, however, that he had made rather a startling declaration, he qualified it by saying, 'Water, by beating, may be made to splash over your head, and by forcing may be made to pass over a mountain; but who would ever say that this is the natural tendency of water? It is because violence is applied to it. Thus men can be made vicious; but it is by no means their nature.'

"The next of three sects, into which the Chinese are divided, is called Taou. This word means, originally, a way or path, a principle, and the principle from which heaven, earth, man, and nature emanate. *Le* is the latent principle, and *Taou* is the principle in action. It also means a word, to speak, and to say; and is very like the *Logos*, or the 'eternal reason' of the Greeks. The founder of this sect was Laou-tan, commonly called Laou-tsze, who was contemporary with Confucius; but the Taou, or Reason itself, they say, is uncreated and underived. Some idea of it may be gained from the following stanza:—

"'How luminous is Eternal Reason!
Uncreated and self-derived:
The beginning and end of all the kalpas;*
Before heaven and before earth;
United brilliancy splendidly illuminated,
For endless kalpas without interruption.
On the east it instructed Father Confucius,
On the west it renovated the golden Buddha:
Hundreds of kings have received this law,
The host of sages have followed this master:
It is the first of all religions,
Majestic beyond all majesty.'

"The doctors of Eternal Reason speak of it in a most rapturous strain. They say—

* Kulpu is a Hindoo term for time, denoting about one thousand ages.

"'What is there superior to heaven, and from which heaven and earth sprang? nay, what is there superior to space, and which moves in space? The great Taou is the parent of space, and space is the parent of heaven and earth; and heaven and earth produced men and things.

"'The venerable prince (Taou) arose prior to the great original, standing at the commencement of the mighty wonderful, and floating in the ocean of deep obscurity. He is spontaneous and self-existing, produced before the beginning of emptiness, commencing prior to uncaused existences, pervading all heaven and earth, whose beginning and end no years can circumscribe.

"'Before heaven and earth were divided, ere the great principles of nature were distinguished, amid the ocean of vast obscurity and universal stillness, there was a spontaneous concretion, out of which came a thousand million particles of primary matter, which produced 'emptiness.' Then, after nine hundred and ninety-nine billions of kalpas had passed away, the thousand million particles of primary matter again concreted, and produced 'space:' after another period of equal length, the particles of primary matter again concreted, and produced 'chaos.' After chaos was settled, heaven and earth divided, and human beings were born.'

"The founder of the Taou sect, called Laou-tsze, 'the venerable philosopher,' and Laou-keun, 'the venerable prince,' though coeval with Confucius, is said to have existed from eternity, and to him they ascribe the creation of the world, as in the following paragraph:—

"'The venerable prince, the origin of primary matter, the root of heaven and earth, the occupier of infinite space, the commencement and beginning of all things, farther back than the utmost stretch of numbers can reach, created the universe.'

"One of the fabled incarnations of Laou-keun is thus described:—'The venerable prince existed before the creation, but was incarnate in the time Yang-këä, of the Shang dynasty, B. C. 1407; when from the regions of great purity and eternal reason, a subtle fluid descended, from the superior principle of nature, and was transformed into a dark yellow substance, about the size of a pill; which, rolling into the mouth of a pearly damsel, while she was asleep, caused her to conceive: the child was not born till eighty-one years afterwards, and on his appearance was gray-headed: hence he was called Laou-tsze, the venerable one. The second appearance of this wonderful individual was in the person of Laou-tan, who was visited by Confucius, B. C. 500. A third appearance occurred in the third year of Kaou-tsoo, of the Tang dynasty, A. D. 623, when a man of Shan-se province reported, that on a certain hill

he had seen an old man in white raiment, who said, 'Go and tell the emperor that I am Laou-keun, his ancestor.' Upon which the emperor ordered a temple to be built for him.

"The votaries of this sect talk a great deal about virtue, and profess to promote it by abstraction from the world, and the repression of desire: this latter they imagine is to be effected by eating their spirits, or stifling their breath for a length of time. They say, that all depends on the subjection of the heart; and therefore mortify every feeling, in order to attain perfect virtue, which is insensibility. Hence some of them wander away to the tops of mountains to cultivate reason, and renounce all intercourse with men, that their studies may not be interrupted. They affect to despise wealth, fame, and posterity; urging, that at death all these distinctions and advantages terminate, and the labour bestowed upon them is thrown away.

"The followers of Taou, like the Athenians of old, are 'in all things too superstitious.' While the Confucians have scarcely determined whether spirits exist or not, the advocates of eternal reason profess to have constant intercourse with, and control over, the demons of the invisible world. Chang Tëen-sze, the principal of the Taou sect, in China, who like the Lama of Thibet, is supposed to be immortal, or rather whose place is supplied by a successor as soon as the old one dies, assumes an authority over Hades. He appoints and removes the deities of various districts, just as the emperor does his officers; and no tutelary divinity can be worshipped, or is supposed capable of protecting his votaries, until the warrant goes forth under the hand and seal of this demon ruler, authorizing him to exercise his functions in a given region.

"The adherents of Taou believe firmly in demoniacal possessions, and endeavour to avail themselves of the ravings of a disturbed imagination to discover future or hidden things. They imagine that the spirits of the invisible world employ the mouths of the possessed to declare audibly the mind of the demon. There are some who are regularly possessed, and some who can induce possession, which they call 'dancing the god.' The author happened once to be present when such a scene was exhibited; the house where it was enacted, was nearly full of spectators; and at the head of the room, near the altar piece,

stood a priest performing various incantations, and now and then striking the floor with a rope which he held in his hand. He then approached a bench, on which sat a native in a pensive mood, over whose head he blew a horn and rang a bell, and went through a few more ceremonies; when the man referred to began to move his fingers, hands, and arms; then his knees and legs, till his whole body became convulsed, and he sprang up, and danced round the room like a madman. Just as he was in the act of falling, he was caught by the bystanders, who listened attentively to what he might have to say, and stood ready to record every expression. The occasion of the ceremony was the dangerous illness of an inmate, for whom they wished to obtain an infallible prescription. The possessed soon announced the requisite remedy, which was something about three skeins of red thread, and half an ounce of carpenter's chips, to be boiled down in a pint of water, and a tea-cupful given occasionally. After the unfolding of this wonderful recipe, the individual sank down into a sort of swoon, and was carried out.

"Magic arts are used, or said to be used, by this sect; by means of which they profess to work wonders; some of them go about with swords thrust through their cheeks; and ride in sedan chairs, stuck round with sharp knives, without appearing to sustain any permanent injury. In the year 1819, an open boat, with an idol and offerings on board, drifted down the China sea, and was picked up at Malacca. The Chinese venerated it as a wondrous relic, and made it the occasion of many sacrifices and superstitions.

"The Taou sect worship a variety of idols, some of which are imaginary incarnations of Eternal Reason.

"We now come to the consideration of the third religion in China, namely, the sect of Buddha. The account given of the founder of this system is as follows: Sakya Muni Buddha was born in the twenty-fourth year of Chaou-wang, B. C. 1027, at Magadha, in South Bahar; in his nineteenth year, he thought of quitting his family connexions, and becoming a recluse, but was at a loss whom to adopt for his spiritual guide. He attended the four schools, but was not satisfied with them, because by all their studies, old age, sickness, and death could not be avoided; when one night, a celestial being appeared at the window, saying,—'Young prince! you have long talked of quitting your family: now

is the time; come away!' The prince, hearing this, cheerfully passed over the city walls, and went to the hills to cultivate virtue. After sixteen years' probation, without following the directions of a master, he entirely repressed the vicious propensities, until he became without feeling, and completely perfect. After escaping the infirmities of age, and avoiding the metempsychosis, he was annihilated, B. C. 948. Before his absorption into nothing, he delivered the following stanza:—

> "'In his system of religion, Buddha followed no system:
> But his baseless system, still became a system:
> He now delivers you this unorganized plan,
> That, by imitating it, you may form a system.'

"In the eighth year of the reign of Ming-te, of the Han dynasty, A. D. 66, the religion of Buddha first entered China. The emperor hearing that there was a divine personage in the west, of the name of Buddha, sent messengers to India, to inquire into his doctrines, obtain his books, and bring some of his priests to China. The historian tells us, that "the general scope of these books was to exalt annihilation, and promote compassion, by not killing animals; affirming that when men die, their spirits do not scatter, but, assuming another form, receive the recompense of all the good and evil they have ever committed; hence they constantly aim to cultivate and improve their spirits, till they become amalgamated into Buddha."

"The empire is now full of Buddhist temples, and the priests of this sect actually swarm. They profess to renounce all family connexions—take a vow of celibacy—shave their heads—dwell in temples—abstain from animal food—and subsist on the voluntary contributions of the people. The gods they worship are the three precious Buddhas—the past, present, and future; Kwan-yin, the goddess of mercy, the goddess of the smallpox, the patroness of barren women, the god of wealth, &c. The three Buddhas are generally represented half-naked, with woolly hair, in a sitting posture; one holding the mundane egg in his lap; one adorned with the sacred thread; and one with his finger upraised, as though engaged in instructing mankind. In front of the three images, or in a separate temple, is an image of the goddess of mercy; in a niche, on one side, the god of war; and, on the other, the protectress of seamen.

A high table, for candles and incense, stands before the images; and in the centre of the temple is a large iron caldron for burning gilt paper in: on either side the hall are placed a bell and a drum, to arouse the attention of the god when important personages come to adore him; and a few cushions and mats, on which the worshippers kneel, make up the furniture of a Buddhist temple. They have no Sabbaths nor periodical seasons of rest; but observe the new and full moon with particular solemnity, and keep, on the whole, one hundred and sixty-two fast-days every year; besides the matins and vespers of each day.

"'Why do we exhort men to fix the thoughts on Buddha but because the most serious consequences are connected with the thoughts of men? That which draws forth the soul, renders fate favourable, and life secure; all proceeds from this source. If the thoughts are good, you ascend to heaven; if bad, you descend to hell. One incorrect thought will cause you, in the transmigration, to return to the world in the shape of a man; and one cross thought, in that of a beast. Why are there so many hungry ghosts in hell? Merely because of wrong thoughts. Think of the devil, and you will become a devil; think of Buddha, and you will be transformed into Buddha. Would you prevent the six grades of the metempsychosis? There is no other method but to think of Buddha. If you will not think of Buddha, you will lose a human body, and for ten thousand ages not be able to regain it. To think of Buddha, and yet not be delivered from alternate births and deaths—it is impossible. If men pray to Buddha, and yet do not become Buddhas, the error is not in Buddha; it is because the mouth prays, and not the mind. We must have Buddha in the mouth and Buddha in the mind—neither of these can be dispensed with.

"'But, it may be said, there are thousands and myriads of Buddhas, why then repeat the name of Amida Buddha only? The answer is, because he swore, that if any one, in all the ten worlds, should, after repeating his name, fail to attain life in his kingdom, he would cease to be a god.

"'The land of his kingdom is yellow gold. Its gardens and palaces are all adorned with gems. It is encircled with rows of trees, and borders of net-work. There are lovely birds, of sparkling plumage and exquisite notes. The great god O-lo-han, the goddess of mercy, the unnumbered Buddhas, the host of demi-gods, and the sages of heaven and earth, will all be assembled in that sacred spot. But in that kingdom there are no women, for the women who will live in that country are first changed into men. The inhabitants are produced from the lotus flower, and have pure and fragrant bodies, fair and well-formed countenances, with hearts full of wisdom, and without vexation. They dress not, and yet are not cold; they dress, and are not made hot. They eat not, and yet are not hungry; they eat, and yet never know satiety. They are without pain and sickness, and never become old. Enjoying themselves, at ease, they follow Buddha, gayly frisking about without trouble. The felicity of that kingdom may be justly considered superlative, and the age of its inhabit-

ants without measure. This is the paradise of the west, and the way to obtain it is the most simple imaginable; depending on one sentence, O-me-to Fuh, (Amida Buddha;) yet the world will not take the trouble to seek this good so easily attained; but put on their iron boots, and go in quest of another road.

"'Swear, then, that you will henceforth repeat the name of Buddha, and seek to live in that western world of joy. Give up books and classics, for others to fag at; leave the thousand roads for others to toil in. Beyond this sentence, 'O-me-to Fuh,' you need not a single word. Let each seek a retired room, and sweep it clean; place therein an image of Buddha; put incense and pure water, with a lighted lamp before it; whether painted on paper, or carved in wood, the figure is just the same as the true Buddha; love it as your father and mother—venerate it as your prince and ruler. Morning and evening worship before it with reverence; on going out, inform it; and, on returning, do the same. Wherever you travel, act as in the presence of Buddha. Whether you eat or drink, offer it up first to Buddha. Raising the eye, or moving the lips, let all be for Buddha. Let not the rosary leave your hands, or O-me-to Fuh, depart from your mouths. Repeat it with a loud voice, and with a low one; in lines of six words, and four words; quickly and slowly; audibly and silently; with clasped hands, and with bended knees; when fingering the rosary and when walking in the road; when in a crowd, and when alone; whether at home or abroad; whether at leisure or in a bustle; whether sitting or lying; repeat it, even in your dreams. Thus to repeat it, will move your feelings, and make your tears to flow; thus to repeat it, will inspire the celestial gods with awe, and the terrestrial demons with reverence; thus to repeat it, will make heaven rejoice, and the gods be glad. At the sound of Buddha's name, the palace of the king of devils moves and shakes. At the sound of Buddha's name, the wood of swords and the mountain of knives (in hell) will, for you, be beaten as small as dust. At the sound of Buddha's name, hundreds and thousands of miseries will all melt away. At the sound of Buddha's name the debt of gratitude to parents, princes, superiors, and benefactors, will all be paid. The man who would squeeze out the oil, must grind the more forcibly: and the mariner who would stem the swelling tide, must ply the oar more vigorously. If you realize, behind you, the boiling caldron of hell, and before you the lotus pools of heaven, though all the world should try to prevent your repeating the name of Buddha, their efforts would be entirely vain.'"

"Such is the heaven of Buddha, and such the way to obtain it. Every morning, after dressing, the devotee is to turn his face to the west, stand upright, clasp his hands, and with a continued sound, say, "O-me-to Fŭh." To exhaust one breath is called "a repetition:" these repetitions must be according to the length of one's breathing. When the breath is quite out, that is the limit. The sound should be modulated according to the due medium. While repeating the name of Buddha, the worshipper is directed to be as

serious as if going to execution, as if fleeing from a mortal enemy, or as if surrounded with floods and flames. The advantages said to accrue to the repeater, are the following: all the gods of heaven will protect him: all the demi-gods will attend him: all the Buddhas will think of him: no devil can harm him, nor calamities afflict him: all his former crimes shall melt away, and he shall be delivered even from the crime of murder: his dreams shall be pleasant, and his heart always glad: the world will respect him; and when he dies, he will see O-me-to Fŭh, and all the sacred ones, who will introduce him to the pure land.

"During the Sung dynasty, they say, that one Hwang, a blacksmith, was in the habit of repeating the name of Buddha, with all his might, at every stroke of the hammer. One day, whilst at his work, he repeated the following verse:—

"'Ting ting, tang tang,
Like the iron's clang:
Peace is come to my breast,
I am bound for the west:'

saying which, he was instantly transformed into Buddha; and, as the story goes, flew away to heaven.

"In addition to the name of Buddha, the adherents of this sect are in the habit of repeating prayers or charms, composed in some Indian language, the sounds of which are expressed in the Chinese character, and rehearsed by the worshippers, without their understanding a single word. The following is a specimen:—

"'Nan-mo o-me-to po-yay to-ta-kĕä to yay, to-te-yay-ta, o-me-le-too po-kwăn, o-me-le-to, seeh-tan-po-kwăn, o-me-le-to, kwăn-kĕa-lan-te, o-me-le-to, kwan-kĕa-lan-te, kĕa-me-ne, kĕa-kĕa-na, cheh-to-kĕa-le, po-po-ho.'

"This form is as unintelligible to the Chinese as it is to the English reader. A very few of the priests, only, understand it: and yet it is supposed efficacious in removing all evil. The books of Buddha affirm, that the god, O-me-to, rests on the head of those who repeat this prayer. When a person has repeated it 200,000 times, the intelligence of the deity begins to bud within him: when he has repeated it 300,000 times, he is at no great distance from a personal vision of the god, O-me-to. During the dynasty

of Tsin, they say that a teacher of the name of Yuen, whilst repeating this prayer, saw a divine person from the west, holding in his hand a silver throne, who addressed him, saying, 'Celebrated teacher! thy days are ended; ascend this throne, and be carried to yonder region of exquisite delights.' The people in the neighbourhood heard the sound of harmonious music in the air, and a marvellous fragrance was diffused all around."

The religion of Buddha, modified under the name of the religion of Fo, has become the prevailing religion of China. Substantially the same system, under different names, prevails in Hindostan, Ceylon, Burmah, Siam, Cochin China, and Japan. Thus we have here a religion, which is exerting its debasing influence on 500,000,000 of human beings. This religion allows the worship of any number of deities. It teaches the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, and promises its votaries, as its highest reward, absorption in Nervana, or a state of insensibility to either pleasure or pain. It declares that to expiate sins and secure their highest heaven of blessedness, nothing more is requisite than to pile their sacrifices on their bloody altars, and to subject themselves to the severest tortures and penances.

In all systems of paganism, there are several features in which all *essentially* agree. I will notice a few *revolting features* in the Chinese religion, which will be but counterparts of most other systems of idolatry. The first I notice is the fact that they have no correct ideas of a Supreme Being, but worship innumerable deities, and those too many of them of the most revolting *character*.

Thus they scatter the affections of the soul, which ought to be anchored fast on the throne of the living God, and leave it to be tossed on the sea of uncertainty, doubt, and absurdity, till it is lost in a miserable eternity. The Chinese have multiplied their deities to an enormous extent. There is no combination of matter so loathsome; no form of vice so degrading; nothing within the range of the human imagination so monstrous, but that it is enthroned in some form or other as an object of homage. Six hundred millions of saints are said to be canonized with each superior deity.* The Grand Lama who resides at Patoli in

* The Buddhists suppose there is always some superior deity who has attained the highest elevation by his merit. To the present grand period, comprehending all the time included in a kulpu, they assign five

Thibet, is at once high-priest and an object of worship in China, as well as in Thibet. He resides in a vast palace near the banks of the Burrampooter, about seven miles from Lahasse. The foot of the mountain is surrounded by 20,000 lamas or priests in attendance on their sovereign pontiff who is regarded as the vicegerent of the deity on earth. Even the emperor of China does not fail to acknowledge him in his religious capacity, and entertains in the palace at Pekin an inferior lama, deputed as his nuncio from Thibet.

*Secondly*, the religion of China proposes no adequate atonement for sin. The Christian reposes his hopes and founds his expectation of pardon on a crucified and risen Saviour. These deluded pagans are groping on in the deep darkness of pagan night, expecting by their own merits, their cruel and bloody rites, to secure the favour of their gods, and thus to gain admission to the elysian fields of *Buddha.*

Thirdly, this religion presents no rational views of future rewards and punishments, or a state of existence beyond the present world; and affords not a particle of clear evidence of the soul's immortality. The Buddhists are taught that there are four superior heavens, which are not destroyed at the end of a kulpu; that below these there are twelve other heavens followed by six inferior heavens, after which follows the earth; then the world of snakes, and then thirty-two chief hells, to which are to be added one hundred and twenty-two hells of milder torments. Their highest state of glory is absorption. (See Ward on history, literature, and religion of Hindoos.) It is difficult to say precisely what they mean by absorption. Dr. Buchanan says, (Asiatic Researches, vol. vi. p. 180,) nigban (absorption) implies exemption from all the miseries incident to humanity, but by no means annihilation. Metempsychosis, or the transmigration of souls, is an idea very prevalent among the Chinese. Those who perform works of merit

deities, four of whom have already appeared, including Gaudama or Buddha, whose exaltation continues five thousand years; two thousand three hundred and fifty-six of which had expired A. D. 1814. After the expiration of five thousand years, another saint will obtain the ascendancy and be *deified.* Six hundred millions of saints are said to be canonized with each deity, though it is admitted that Buddha took only twenty-four thousand devotees to heaven with him.—(See Mr. Ward on the history, literature, and religion of the Hindoos, vol. ii. pp. 387.)

are admitted to the heavens of the different gods, or are made kings or great men on earth; and those who are wicked are born in the forms of different animals, or consigned to different hells. They usually doom the notoriously bad at once to hell, but those who were guilty of lesser crimes are punished for them in the bodies of those into which their souls are next *sent*. The Buddhists believe that at the end of a kulpu the universe is destroyed. To convey some idea of the extent of this period, the illiterate Cingalese use this comparison: if a man were to ascend a mountain nine miles high, and to renew these journeys once in every hundred years, till the mountain were worn down by his feet to an atom, the time required to do this would be nothing to the fourth part of a *kulpu*.

The religion of Buddha is no better then than atheism, and the highest reward of piety no better than annihilation. O! how inexpressibly bright then must be the *contrasted* light of the gospel to a devotee of this religion, who becomes a convert to Christianity. As Christianity comes to him, she scatters the darkness that hangs over the tomb; she enters the iron gates of death, and casts her angelic smile around upon its cold and slumbering tenants, and says in the language of her native heavens, "Let there be life:" and she points to the resurrection of her glorious Author, and gives the everlasting pledge that ere long there *shall* be life, and that the righteous shall rise to glory and immortality, but the wicked to shame and everlasting contempt.

"Idolatry is everywhere marked by two leading qualities, *cruelty* and *impiety*. Their deities are of a ferocious and sanguinary character. The more we become acquainted with these idolaters, like Ezekiel when he surveyed the chambers of imagery, we discover only the greater abominations. In their system as connected with their conduct, there is a perpetual action and *reaction*, *vice* generating *idols*, and *idols* fortifying *vice*. First we find mere abstractions of the mind, formed concerning the *deity;* these are next imbodied in idols, and all the human passions are enlisted by devotion itself on the side of vice."*

Such is a brief view of the religious condition of the largest empire on earth, with the exception of Russia. And when we contemplate this mammoth system of idolatry, in all its native deformity,—

* Robert Hall's works, vol. vi. p. 409.

"Fierce as ten furies, terrible as hell,"

we do not wonder that it has rent from the human heart all that was endearing in the charities of life; that it has taught the mother to tear away the smiling infant clinging to her breast, and to cast it the shrieking prey to contending *alligators;* or that children can convey their parents, just stepping into the eternal world, to some lonely forest, to become the prey of devouring beasts.

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## PART THIRD.

II. We come now to the second general object proposed in this article, which was to exhibit some of the *lighter* and *brighter* shades in the picture of the condition of China, as affording ground of encouragement for increased exertion to supply it with the gospel, the only moral remedy for its evils.

1. The first thing I notice is the comparatively easy intercourse with the Chinese, contrasted with the former rigour of the government in this respect. It has, till quite recently, been supposed that intercourse with the Chinese, to any considerable extent, was impossible. But the voyages of the devoted and enterprising *Netherlands* missionary, Gutzlaff, along the coast, and into the interior of the empire, have demonstrated the practicability of extensive intercourse with them. The laws, it is true, remain severe against *foreigners*, not allowing any, on pain of death, to land at her ports, except a few English merchants at *Canton*. The jealousy and prejudice of the government against foreigners originated, in a measure, in the mistaken notions they entertained respecting *liberty* and *Christianity*. They have feared them worse than the *cholera* spreading desolation among her population. This prejudice may be accounted for *partly* from the *limited means* of information they have enjoyed respecting enlightened nations, and *partly* from the *channels* through which their information has *flown*. They have gathered their ideas of *liberty* principally from the French revolutions, bursting forth occasionally like volcanoes, and burying the government in *ruins*. They have derived their notions of Christianity

principally from the Roman Catholics, who have long been missionaries among them.* And what could they see to

* The efforts of the Roman Catholics, in behalf of China, commenced in the beginning of the fourteenth century, when Nicholas IV. sent Corvino on an embassy to Coblai, the first emperor of the Mogul dynasty; and, in 1307, Clement V. constituted him bishop of Cambalu, of Peking. Benedict VI., A. D. 1338, sent new agents into China and Tartary. Nothing more is heard of the efforts to convert the Chinese until the Portuguese rounded the Cape of Good Hope, and established themselves at Goa. In 1511 Alphonso took Malacca; and eight years afterwards Andrade sailed for China. A second embassy was despatched to China, A. D. 1552, accompanied by Francis Xavier, who ardently desired the gaining of so vast an empire to the Christian *religion*. On his arrival at the mouth of the Canton river, he was told that strangers were debarred from entering the country; and that if he attempted to land, he would be imprisoned or put to death. Persisting in his resolution, he induced a Chinese to convey him on shore during the night, at the island of Sancian, or St. John. He was not permitted, however, to do more than just to land and die on shore, where his tomb still remains, with the following inscription in Chinese: "The monument of St. Francis Xavier, of the society of Jesus in the great west, who ascended to glory, in the winter of the 31st year of Ming Kea-tsung, A. D. 1553."

The zeal of Xavier animated his brethren; but for thirty years they could make no impression on China. During this period Valignani resided at Macao, and cast many a longing look towards the celestial empire, crying out in the fervency of his desire, "O, rock! rock! when wilt thou open?" Not discouraged by difficulties, he looked out for the fittest instruments, who, dead to themselves, and breathing nothing but resignation and martyrdom, should by their skill in the sciences be able to recommend themselves to the Chinese. In 1579, M. Roger, an Italian Jesuit, arrived in China, where he was soon joined by Matthew Ricci. A church was soon formed, over which Ricci presided for about seven years. He afterwards repaired to Nankin, where, by his discourses on science, he gained favour, and made some proselytes.

Encouraged by the openings that presented themselves, Louis XIV., King of France, resolved to send a mission to China; and having selected a number of Jesuits, well skilled in the mathematics, he sent them with honours and pensions on this important mission. They went first to Siam, and from thence proceeded in a Chinese junk to Ning-po, on the coast of China. The mandarins at that port received them kindly; but the viceroy declared it unlawful for native vessels to bring Europeans to China, and threatened to send the missionaries back and confiscate both ship and cargo. The emperor being memorialized on the subject, replied, "Men of that character must not be expelled my dominions. Let them all come to my court; those who understand the mathematics shall remain about my person: the others may dispose of themselves in the province as they think fit."

Accessions have been made from time to time to the Catholic mission, and they have persevered in their labours to convert the Chinese, and have made many proselytes. By a statement of ten Roman Catholic

admire in the Roman Catholic religion? If rebuked for their idolatry, they could retort on the Roman Catholic, "How many removes from idolatry is it to venerate and worship the relics of departed saints, and even of some who never had a being; as the fabled St. *Ursula*, with her ten thousand virgin martyrs, of whom no trace is found in history?" If allusion were made to the cruel rites connected with their religion, they in turn might ask them if there is not at least a *tendency* to cruelty in that religion which will sanction such a massacre, for instance, as that of St. Bartholomew, in 1572?*

But the Chinese are beginning to secure more accurate information, and to learn the value of civil liberty, not from the French revolutions, but from the happy land of America, where the experiment of freedom has been tested with the most flattering success. They begin, also, to learn that the value of the Christian religion cannot be determined by Catholicism, alias the mother of abominations; but that Protestants have examples in bold relief to show the efficacy and power of the gospel on individuals and nations. They see a light shining on Ceylon, and other islands of the sea, with inexpressible brightness, chasing away the clouds and errors of paganism; and they understand that the gospel poured down that divine radiance. They begin to learn that the protestant missionary has come to do them good—to benefit them *physically*, *intellectually*, and *morally;* and their prejudices are abating. Mr. Gutzlaff has penetrated the whole length and breadth of the land, everywhere distributing Christian books, and declaring the unsearch-

missionaries, who recently arrived at Batavia, on their way to Cochin China, it appears that there are in Tonquin and Cochin China four bishops, fifteen European missionaries, upwards of one hundred native missionaries, and more than four hundred thousand *converts*. See Davenport's History, and Medhurst's State and Prospects of *China*.

* This slaughter continued thirty days. It was commenced at the instigation of Catharine de Medici, who reigned during the minority of Charles IX. on the throne of France, and directed particularly against the *Huguenots*. Five hundred gentlemen and ten thousand of the lower classes were assassinated at Paris, and not less than thirty thousand in the provinces. At Rome cannons were discharged, the pope ordered a jubilee, and a procession to the church of St. Louis, and caused "Te Deum" to be chanted, and the cardinal to return thanks to Almighty God, and a medal to be struck, in honour of the unprincipled transaction. See Schiller's History of the Troubles in France, vol. xvi.

able riches of Christ to thronging and eager multitudes. It has been thought that the time is not far distant when a free trade with China will open facilities for the rapid extension of the gospel in that land.

2. Another encouraging fact is, that several missions have already been established and successfully maintained in China. The first protestant missionary to China was the Rev. Dr. Morrison, of England, who sailed for China in 1807. He was soon joined by Dr. Milne. Our own mission for China was commenced in 1830, and the Netherlands mission in 1831.

The first Chinese convert under the labours of Dr. Morrison was Tsae-A-ko, aged 27, who, after long instruction, came forward and made a public profession of religion in the following language:—"Jesus making atonement for sin is the blessed sound. Language and thought are both inadequate to exhaust the admirable goodness of Jesus. I now believe on him, and rely on him for the remission of sins. I have many defects, and without faith in Jesus should be eternally miserable." He adhered to his profession till his death, in 1818. Much was accomplished for China by the labours of Dr. Morrison. He translated the whole Bible, with the assistance of Dr. Milne, into the Chinese language. He also composed a large dictionary of the Chinese language, which was afterwards published by the East India Company, at an expense of £15,000. He prepared also many other small books and tracts, which are destined to exert a powerful influence in China. In the year 1832 Dr. Morrison writes: "I have been twenty-five years in China, and am now beginning to see the work prosper. By the press we have been able to scatter knowledge far and wide." This efficient missionary was called away to his reward in heaven in August, 1834.

Messrs. Bridgeman and Parker, at Canton, have been prosecuting their labours with commendable zeal and success. The attempts which have been made to unite the *medical practice* with that of preaching the gospel have been crowned with abundant success. The last instance is that of Dr. Parker, who, in November, 1835, opened an Ophthalmic Hospital, in Canton, at which, within the space of two years, three thousand patients were relieved. One man had his arm amputated at the shoulder joints; which was the first instance, in Canton, of a native's volun-

tarily submitting to the removal of a limb. The people have been remarkably eager to avail themselves of the benefits of the institution, and have been very grateful for the benefits imparted. The hospital has been approved of by the government. One of the private secretaries to the chief magistrate of Canton has been restored to sight, and has indited a poem to the praise of his benefactor. Says Mr. Medhurst, "Medical and surgical practitioners, seeking to benefit the nations of the east, may safely reside in all the islands of the Malagar Archipelago, in Burmah and Siam, as well as on the borders of China." It is true that in order to promote the conversion of souls we must employ the preaching of the gospel, in dependence on the Holy Spirit; but it is also true that we cannot adopt a more effectual means for promoting the introduction of evangelical instruction into China, than by making medicine the pioneer of *religion*.

3. Again: another encouraging fact is the facilities which are afforded in China for the dissemination of Christian knowledge through the press. The Chinese are a reading people, and the number of their public works is very considerable. In the department of morals, history, biography, the drama, poetry, and romance, there is no lack of writings, such as they are. China has had, too, her Augustan age of poetry. And it is a remarkable fact, that this brilliant epoch in Chinese letters was during the eighth century of our era, when almost the whole of Europe was sunk in gross ignorance and barbarism.

"The number of individuals acquainted with letters in China is amazingly great. One-half of the male population are able to read; while some mount the 'cloudy ladder' of literary fame, and far exceed their companions."* "Whether the knowledge or tradition of the art of printing may not have travelled westward from China, through the channels of oriental intercourse, is a fair question for speculation. Nothing is more clear than that the Chinese were in the possession of this contrivance in the tenth century. Stereotype or block printing has always been the mode which they have practised. Strictly speaking, the press of China would be a misnomer, as no press whatever is used. The whole apparatus of the printer is made up of a

* Medhurst's State and Prospects of China, p. 144.

vessel of liquid ink, a pile of paper, a brush to ink the block, and a rubber to make the paper take the impression. The business is managed with such expedition, that a man can throw off three thousand impressions in a day. The speed and cheapness of printing, with the low price of paper, enable the Chinese to furnish books to each other for next to nothing."

The prevailing systems of religion, in China, were circulated through means of books, as public speaking and preaching are by law forbidden. Our missionaries at Canton have purchased a large printing establishment at Singapore, having two presses and two founts of type. The character and location of Singapore will make this an important acquisition. This is one of the most important ports of the whole east. One hundred and forty junks and boats arrive and depart from it every month, touching at all the ports along the whole coast of China.

The language of China has been found more easy of acquisition than it was formerly supposed to be. It is true the characters in this language are very numerous, there being not less than eighty thousand; but the elementary characters from which all the rest are derived by various combinations, is only two hundred and fourteen; and by close application, a good linguist will acquire the language as soon as most other foreign languages. The Chinese language consists of hieroglyphic characters. These are divided into six classes; first, the *pictorial*, or those which have some resemblance to the object, such as sun, moon, mountains; second, *metaphorical*, or those that derive a meaning from something else; thus the character for "handle," signifies also "authority;" third, *indicative*, or those which indicate the sense by the formation of the character, as a man above ground signifies "above," and one underneath, "below;" fourth, *constructive*, or those which derive their signification from the component parts of the *character*, as the symbol for "mouth," over another denoting "tree" signify when united, "birds singing;" fifth, *derivative*, or those that are formed from others with a slight alteration, as the character for "great," with an additional dot over it means "very great;" sixth, *phonetic*, or those in which *form* and *sound* harmonize together, as the characters for river and stream, in which three drops repre-

sent the water, combined with other characters whose sound is known.*

From what has been said, it will be seen that the facilities for bringing the mighty engine of the press to bear on the millions of China, are peculiarly great.

4. The next favourable circumstance to which I will allude, is the eagerness of the people for Christian books, and the cordiality with which they are received. This point will be abundantly confirmed by the citation of a few extracts from those who have traversed the field in person.

Leang-Afa, one of the earliest and most efficient Chinese converts, in giving an account of the distribution of books on a tour to Chaou-king-fo, states, "when the students knew that we had books in our boat for distribution, they came with many other persons to receive them; all these persons received the books with gladness and thankfulness. The literati, and merchants, and other people from the boats far and near, came to obtain the books; and there were

* *Chinese Language.*—The first information received by Europeans respecting the written language of the Chinese, was from the Catholic missionaries. They represented it as comprising 80,000 characters. Later researches have shown that the elementary characters are much fewer. In an account of this language published in 1825, Dr. Morrison gives first a collection of 373 ancient symbols with explanations of their meaning and origin. These ancient symbols are said to constitute the first principles of the language. From them were derived 214 characters called radicals, from which all the rest were formed. He next gives a table of 411 syllables, of which, exclusive of tones and accents, the spoken language consists. The 214 radicals, and 411 syllables, are considered as forming the materials of the whole written language. Its characters are not intended to be the signs of simple articulate sounds. They are sometimes denominated hieroglyphic and symbolical. It originated in a sort of picture writing, from which it has, after the lapse of many years, become what it now is. In its present state, the best idea of its character would be derived from comparing it with the Arabic figures. These characters, figures, or symbols are now almost universally understood throughout the world, however differently named by people of different nations; and the primitive signs are now to most nations quite *arbitrary*, whatever the reasons of their first formation might have been. But supposing 2 and 3 to be entirely arbitrary, the union of these two, 23 and 32, presents to the eye a definite idea, which is the result of combination, and which remains the same whether pronounced by an Englishman, a Hindoo, or a Chinese, in the spoken language peculiar to each nation. In consequence of this peculiarity of the Chinese written language, it is understood and read in all the regions of eastern Asia, by people whose languages are very different, and who cannot maintain the least oral intercourse with each other.

some who wished to know what doctrines they contained. I told them that they were chiefly selections from the *true classics*, the Holy Book, and contained doctrines in the highest degree important to men ; advising them first of all to adore the great Lord of heaven and earth, and then to believe in the Saviour of the world for the salvation of their souls." He distributed about 8000 books in three days.

Mr. Gutzlaff, in a letter under date Nov. 10th, 1833, from Canton, to P. Perritt, Esq. writes as follows : "Since you received my last journal I have made more extensive tours and never met with any obstacles. I visited Mantchoo, Tartary, Keang-nan, Chi-keang, and Fuhkeeun, and spread the word of life on a more extensive scale than ever before. A later tour which I made during the summer months in the Fuhkeeun tea country, has but confirmed me in my opinion that China is open for the spread of the gospel. My medical practice has also been very extensive, and is now rather too large; for if I did not *occasionally* run away, I might have to serve 1000 patients per day. I hail the arrival of new labourers from your country, the cradle of liberty. Tell my friends in America who take an interest in my excursions, that as long as there is still breath in me —as long as I can move my hand, I hope to be enabled by the grace of God to *speak*, and to *act*, and to *write* in behalf of *China*."

Mr. Medhurst describes the eagerness of the people for books on several *occasions*. While at Ke-san-so he states, "stepping on shore, we began to give away a few *books*, which were no sooner in their hands than we were surrounded by numbers begging for more. Here we told the sailor who accompanied us, to open his basket, when the whole crowd rushed forward, and thrusting their hands at once among the books, tumbled both sailor and basket off the boat into the sand."

Dr. Milne in a letter under date July 2d, 1814, in giving the directors of the London Missionary Society an account of a voyage of 1400 miles which he had made to Java, writes : "The Chinese of all ranks and in every place received my books gladly, and listened with patience to what I had to say about the true God."

5. I would in the fifth and last place, allude to the declining state of paganism in China, as a ground of encouragement.

The temples of Buddha are in various places in a state of decline.* The more reflecting and intelligent of the Chinese begin to acknowledge that their systems of paganism are based upon ignorance and superstition, are unworthy the dignity of the immortal mind, and totally inadequate to answer the purposes of mere *political utility* and *prosperity*. A fierce contest is going on between the antagonist principles of divine truth and human error. The power of the Spirit from on high, is making a terrible onset on the combined powers of moral darkness. Holiness is coming up to the mortal struggle with sin. This is a conflict enlisting on the one hand the resources of Omnipotence, and on the other the combined powers of hell. It is a contest between the church and good men on earth, and infidelity, atheism, and superstition, led on by the arch foe of human *happiness*. And there is a moral omnipotence in truth—in the gospel, which is making the old temple of idolatry to tremble on its firm pillars. Indeed, so absurd and ridiculous is paganism, that it cannot stand under the brightness of the Sun of Righteousness. Hence idolatry will vanish in China just in proportion as the gospel can secure a patient and candid hearing.

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## PART FOURTH.

In concluding these imperfect remarks, I would throw out the three following reflections.

1. In the first place contemplate the moral glory and sublimity of the *missionary enterprise*. It aims to break up the loathsome system of idolatry, and regenerate the whole society of one of the most extensive empires on *earth*. It

* On all sides we were gratified by perceiving marks of decay in the temples and adjacent buildings, and earnestly hope that future travellers will find these worse than useless structures level with the ground; and the lazy drones who inhabit them scattered abroad or employed in promoting the welfare and intelligence of their fellow-countrymen. One of the priests wished us to contribute something towards beautifying an image which had lost its gilt coat, and looked rather shabby, but we told him that his was a poor god that could not furnish himself with clothes; for our part, when our apparel was worn out, we contrived to get a new dress by honest industry, and should leave their god to do the same.—(See Medhurst's State and Prospect of China, p. 396.; visit to Poo-too.)

aims to seek and to save in yonder benighted China, more than 360,000,000 of immortal souls, who are now sunk in the deepest degradation. It aims to save and regenerate *China*, did I say? This is in fact but *one* of the strongholds of the adversary which it would *rescue* from his cruel grasp. Contemplate then distinctly and fully the sublimity of this enterprise. What are its *aims*? Its field is the world. It desires to produce a radical revolution in the temporal and moral interests of the whole human race. "It seeks first to *uproot*, *overturn*, and *demolish* the whole kingdom of evil; to take down its entire fabric from its top-stone to its lowest foundation; to sweep the earth clear, and leave not on its wide field a trace of the present order of things in the unevangelized world. Next and meanwhile, it seeks to let down, and lay deep, and broad, and immovable, the foundations; and rear high, and beautiful, and *eternal*, the superstructure of the kingdom of righteousness and peace. Its object is to 'bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ,' and to fill the habits, customs, and manners, all the learning, and governments, and religion of our race with the spirit of Christ."

What are its *instrumentalities* and *means?* The weapons of its warfare are not *carnal* but *spiritual*. It would come with no array of *physical force*. "The type of its spreading is the silent beautiful light rising calmly up against the reign of darkness, and filling the whole heavens with floods of *splendour*." It is by going forth and telling the children of men the simple story of redeeming love, and by the eloquence of such an appeal to persuade them to be reconciled to *God*. Its instruments are, the living teacher with the word of God, sowing broadcast the good seed of the kingdom. It would bring to its aid the mighty power of the press, and every other appliance to disseminate *light* and *truth*. But its *efficient agency* to convert the soul is a power from on *high*. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." How simple the means! The wisdom of God has devised apparently the weakest means to effect the most magnificent of results. Though simple, yet how astonishingly efficacious these means! The preaching of the gospel is a remedy which has been tested by the experience of 1800 years. Its efficacy has been proved by human beings of all ages, from the lisping infant to the sinner an hundred years old. All cli-

mates have witnessed its power. From the ice-bound cliffs of Greenland, to the banks of the voluptuous Ganges, and to the utmost verge of China, the simple story of Christ crucified has turned men from darkness to light. It has stretched the rainbow of promise over the hunting ground and forest of the savage Indian of the western wild, and taught him to worship the Great Spirit who made *him*. It has revolutionized and raised to a high degree of moral dignity many islands of the sea. It has pierced the black and loathsome groves of Druidical barbarism in Britain, Germany, and Gaul, and taught the Druid not to look for the residence of the *Almighty* only in their sacred oak, but that his temple is everywhere; that the "heaven of heavens" cannot contain him; that their human sacrifices will not avail them; but that the blood of Christ alone can avail, that "cleanses from all sin."* It has planted the rose of Sharon among the moors of Scotland. It has raised in England ten thousand spires, all pointing to the skies, and elucidating its power to elevate the human soul in all that exalts. It has spread a charm over Geneva in *Switzerland*, sweeter than her picturesque scenery, and gilded as her lake when the sun sets upon its waves. This is the power that is beginning to penetrate the deep moral darkness of pagan China, and will in time work out its regeneration. By these *simple* and *effectual* means, it will go on "conquering and to conquer," until

> "One song employs all nations, and all cry,
> Worthy the Lamb, for he was slain for us.
> The dwellers in the vales and on the rocks,
> Shout to each other; and the mountain tops

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* "The Druids considered the oak as the emblem, or rather the peculiar residence of the Almighty, and accordingly chaplets of it were worn both by the Druids and people in their ceremonies; the altars were strewed with its leaves, and encircled with its branches. The fruit of it, especially the misletoe, was thought to contain a divine virtue, and to be the peculiar gift of heaven. As soon as they were informed of the discovery of the misletoe, they prepared for the sacrifice under the oak, to which they fastened two white bulls by the horns; then the arch Druid, attended by a prodigious number of people ascended the tree, dressed in white, and with a consecrated golden knife, cropped the misletoe, which he received in his robe. According to Cesar, they in some cases offered human victims, and that upon the conviction that human blood was required to atone for human guilt."

From distant mountains catch the flying joy,
Till nation after nation taught the strain,
Earth rolls the rapturous hosanna round."

2. In the second place reflect on the grounds of our encouragement, and hope that the great work of converting China will be effected. The obstacles are *great*, it is true, but they are not *insurmountable.* The difficulty of converting China is increased, not only by deep-rooted prejudices, but from the fact, that these are backed by all the array of political power and philosophical cunning. All that is now doing is some score of Christian missionaries sustained by the churches of England and America, and one thousand persons thereby brought under instruction, and the average number converted in a year is not more than ten.* Could we bring one thousand individuals under instruction every day, and give them only a day's teaching each, it would take one thousand years to bring all the population of China thus under the sound of the gospel; and if every ten of these separate thousands were every day converted to God, it would require one hundred thousand years to make all this mighty host savingly acquainted with divine truth.

Thus the magnitude of the work disheartens and depresses the mind. The multitudes to be benefited, and the distance to which the supposed accomplishment of the design is removed, sickens, so that men of common mould and usual energies would hardly venture on such an undertaking.

But remember, desponding Christian, on whose *power* it is that we rely. Do you talk of *power?* The God who forms a blade of grass, and begets a drop of dew, can as easily convert a *soul;* and he who converts *one* soul can as easily convert a *nation.* Every day, in the midst of heathen lands, God exerts a power sufficient to save a *universe.* Who gives to the pagans life, and breath, and reason, and conscience? Who causes their sun to shine, and their ground to yield its fruits? Talk no more, then, about the *possibility* of converting China to God. It is only for God to speak the word, and the work is done. He can cause all China to bow to his grace as easily as he can shake the leaves of the forest. Contemplate the cha-

* These facts are on the authority of those who have canvassed the field, as Messrs. Bridgeman & Medhurst.

racter of the gospel for *diffusion*. It is aptly compared to a little leaven, that gradually spreads itself till it leavens the whole lump. Its very instinct is *propagation*. No sooner is one converted, than he is anxious to make it known to others. In this way one may be the means of awakening ten, and ten of communicating the same blessing to a hundred; and so the influence may widen and extend. Its influence may be compared to the little pebble thrown upon the surface of a mighty lake. The pulsation is at first but a little circle. But it spreads and widens, circling wave impelling circling wave, stretching out further and further upon the limpid waters, till it becomes lost in its extension, or strikes on the distant shore.

Archimedes thought if he could get a place to stand on, he could construct a lever by which he could raise the world. China is under one despotic monarchy; and if by the prayers of Christians the grace of God should bow the heart of the emperor of China, we should have a lever with which to raise China from its degradation; and who can tell how soon, under God, this might be the means of raising that whole empire to the light of holiness and moral beauty. The Christian who by his prayers and influence should cause an arrow from God to pierce the heart of this self-styled "Son of Heaven," and convert the "Dragon Throne" to the purposes of piety and benevolence, would be truly a polished shaft in the quiver of the Almighty—would effect more than Archimedes, even if he had carried his plans into effect.

That God will in due time bring about the conversion of China is placed beyond a doubt by his own eternal pledge. He has declared that the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, should become a great mountain, and fill the whole earth. Besides, there is a specific *prophecy* respecting *China*. In Isa. xlix. 12, God says, "Behold, these shall come from far; and, lo! these from the north and west; and these from the land of Sinim." Great philologists are agreed that Sinim was the name under which eastern Asia, or China, was known to the inhabitants of western Asia. The purposes of God in relation to the ultimate triumph of the church seem to be interwoven with the very frame-work of the Bible; and these sublime plans of the Divine mind seem to be hastening to a completion; when the song of triumph shall rend the heavens, and go

up from all parts of the earth, as the voice of many waters; "Alleluia; for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth."

3. In the third place, the exhibition of the condition of China which we have furnished affords the ground of an earnest appeal to Christians to awake from their deep slumbers, and to adopt more efficient measures for sending the gospel to *China*. No one who has read these few pages will hesitate to admit that China greatly needs the gospel; and no one who admits the authority of revelation will doubt the final triumph of Christianity in that extensive empire. The great question is, about the *best means* of bringing about so *desirable* an *end*. God works by instruments, and generally apportions *results*, other things being equal, to the amount of *means* employed. If we expect China to be converted, the friends of the Redeemer must come up to the great work with a moral courage and energy commensurate with the importance of the object. A larger number of missionaries, well qualified in *mind* and in *heart*, must be sent forth to those fields white and waving already for the *harvest*. How can we expect, with a single score of missionaries, to produce any great effect on the hundreds of millions of China? As well might we attempt with a feeble wire to move a solid rock, as with so small a band to move and influence so vast a multitude. Is not the object one of surpassing moral grandeur? Are there not motives enough clustering around this enterprise to incite us to action? There was a time once, when, at the voice of Peter, the sceptered hermit, all *Christendom* poured its bannered legions upon the shores of western Asia. And for what? It was the crusaders seeking to rescue the sepulchres of the Holy City from the hands of infidels. China has been in the hands of infidels for centuries, and of that *destroyer* too who has destroyed a million annually, and fitted many we fear for eternal woes. But what might not be accomplished if Christians were to engage in the work with only a small degree of the enthusiasm of the crusaders? With a proper degree of interest and devotion to the cause, not thirty years would elapse before the high arches of heaven would ring with the song of "Glory to God in the highest," at the jubilee of China's redemption. Do you say, what can *I* do? Every one can pray. There is no Christian so small or so weak but that he can exert an influence in prayer, that shall influence Him who moves

the wheels of universal nature, and turns the hearts of the children of men as the rivers of water are turned. Who knows but that your prayers may affect the heart of some heathen prince, and induce him to submit to God, and to lead his people to cast their idols to the moles and bats, and to worship the true God? and thus a nation to be born at once?* Again; all can contribute *something*, at least, to swell the mighty river of benevolence which is flowing in a broad and deep current over the earth. Do you say, I am poor? Be it so. This will not deprive you of the heavenly luxury of doing good, and of giving a *little, at least*, to aid in the work of converting the world to God. Your *external* means may be indeed *limited;* but under the blessing of God, the *little* that *you* may give may contribute to place a tract or a Bible in the hands of a pagan, which shall result in his conversion; or, combining with other gifts, it may be the origin of some stream of benevolent influence, which, in its operation, shall resemble the flow of the ocean, rolling its fulness in perpetual waves upon the most distant shores.

In the next place, all can do something to excite the spirit of missions in our own land. The mainspring of efficient action in the cause of missions is eminent piety, and a feeling of deep and lively interest in the work. There is no lack of mind, funds, and resources, if they could be *developed* and brought out and *consecrated to God.* Other enterprises of a *secular cast* can command resources. For a system of *internal* improvements in the single state of Pennsylvania twenty-two millions of dollars is freely given; but to redeem the millions of immortal souls who are perishing for lack of vision, when was an expenditure so liberal *thought* of? I *repeat* it, then, what is needed is a higher tone of piety, a supreme devotedness to God, and an intense ruling passion to subserve the glory of God and the good of man. This state of feeling must be induced by the efforts of Christians. Every one should feel it to be the great enterprise of the age, to produce a right state of feeling on this subject, and thus to secure efficient action. The minds of Christians on this subject must be enlightened, their hearts enlarged; then their purses will be opened—their energies and influence combined. Then with *true*, not deceitful lips, they will sing:—

* Isa. lxvi. 8.

"All that I am, and all I have,
Shall be forever thine;
Whate'er my duty bids me give
My cheerful hands resign."

Again, some must go *personally* to the heathen, and thus open channels in pagan lands, in which shall flow the soul-healing waters of the heavenly Siloa. And it is to be lamented that so few of our pious young men devote themselves to this great work. The zeal of the infatuated Jesuits has been tenfold more than that of Protestants. "After my return to Europe," said one of their missionaries, "when my intention of seeking labourers for this vineyard was divulged, immediately there were so many candidates, that there is scarce a province of our society from which I have not received many letters, from several fathers, not only offering themselves, but earnestly requesting me to accept them as soldiers in this enterprise. In Portugal, from the two colleges of Coimbra and Ebora alone, I had a list of ninety persons so desirous to labour in this mission that many of them have sent me very long letters all written and signed *with their own blood*, witnessing, in this manner, that they had a holy courage that could despise the threats of martyrdom; offering cheerfully to the Lord that little blood as a testimony of the great desire they had to shed it for his sake."*

This work has a claim on every class of Christians. The work of evangelizing China and other pagan nations demands more than the labours of ministers and ordained missionaries. There must be teachers, physicians, merchants, in places, mechanics—Christian communities, who can employ all the various means by which the heathen may be influenced, and that they may have examples in bold relief of the redeeming influence of Christianity. Besides which, the pen must be kept at work, and new works written and published calculated to inform and improve the mind of China. The acquisition of a good Chinese style is said to be difficult; and unless the publications be drawn up in an intelligible and idiomatic form they will not be read. Such a habit of writing can only be the result of years of *study*. This subject appeals to men of *property*. There are men intrusted with vast wealth, who have no

* Chinese Repository, vol. i. p. 487.

peculiar obstacles in the way of going even in person to pagan lands; and how powerfully would their presence, counsels, prayers, and funds contribute to advance the Saviour's glory! I see no good reason why men of wealth are entirely released from obligations of this sort; even if they give liberally, and preach the gospel by proxy. Has a man, *born* to a princely fortune or successful in *acquiring* one, any greater liberty to consult his pleasure in the disposal of himself and property than another?

The co-operation and influence of ladies are especially needed in this work. In many countries they alone have access to those of their own sex. The only one who ever resided at Siam was admitted within the palace walls, and among the numerous wives of the princes and chief men of the country. None but them can succeed in female and infant schools, in obtaining scholars, and instructing and advising mothers. The appeal to ladies is *peculiarly affecting*. It is the language of the degraded and miserable of more than half their sex. Ye ladies! if the world ever be converted, and bloom all over with the trees of righteousness, *yours* must be a prominent part in the grand *achievement*. Ye mothers! the church looks to you to replenish with your daughters the army which the King of kings is to lead on through successive victory to the final conquest of the nations.

The *statesman* has an interest in the success of missions. This enterprise opens new havens at the antipodes of the earth for our fleets; discloses new channels for our commerce; lays the foundation of more extensive trade. This cause furnishes an appeal to the *philosopher*. The missionary has discovered new fields—traversed hitherto unexplored regions, and wilds never pressed by human footsteps. It masters and reduces to a system languages hitherto unknown; it adds new and interesting facts to the natural and moral history of man. It teaches philosophy that her dreams of ever correcting the evils and the wayward perversities of human nature by *reason* are chimerical. It affords illustrations of the power of Christianity to renovate human society, and to correct the evils of our nature; to remove the fell purpose of revenge that rankles in the heart; to arrest the duellist seeking the sylvan recess with the weapon of death in his hand, and to cause him to drop his instrument of death, and to love his enemy; to

make a good man of the assassin that has lurked in the thicket for his prey; to inspire the savage warrior, whose hands have been reddened with the blood of his foe, with the mild principles of the Prince of peace.

Let then every friend of his race, and especially every Christian of our own land, from the far distant pines of the east to the prairies of the west, bestir himself to *think* and act for China and other heathen lands. Hindostan has heard of the Redeemer, and flies to his standard. "Burmah's deliverance is at hand." The islands of the sea have either received or are waiting for the law of God. The poor Indians scattered through our forests can tell "what a precious Saviour they have found;" burning Africa is beginning to throw off the mantle of heathenish superstition and ignorance; O! let infatuated China, which is beckoning to us for the gospel, be speedily furnished with the waters of eternal life.

"Shall we, whose souls are lighted
With wisdom from on high—
Shall we, to men benighted,
The lamp of life deny?"

# No. X.

## THE MERCILESS CREDITOR.

BY REV. GEORGE A. RAYBOLD,

OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

I MENTION debt as one of the troubles of the family of Mr. Fagan. William had traded with the storekeeper of the village, and owed him a considerable sum, yet it was not any more than his property would doubly pay, at any time. Yet in the time of his sickness, he could not avoid this evil. The storekeeper was a member of the church—was constant in his attendance upon the means of grace—and was as faithful to his interests behind the counter. And the opinion may be safely indulged, that, if the interests of his soul had been guarded as carefully as those of his store, it would have been as rich in grace as his store in goods, or his coffers in cash. But he was a mere muckworm. He prided himself on rendering strict justice to all men, (according to his ideas of justice,) but mercy or compassion made no part of his composition. He was a very Diotrephes in prating and loving pre-eminence, and a very Demas in his pursuit of the things of this world. He would sell poison, in the shape of spirits, to a poor drunkard, if he could get the pay for it, but refuse the wife and children of that man bread to eat, if they referred to the father for pay. It may be said the times tolerated such procedure in business ; but this is a very great error. No time, no circumstance will justify a professor of piety in acts of inconsistency so glaring.

William had traded with this individual for a long time, and he paid him much money, for his goods were sold at an enormous advance. Yet that brother in the church refused to credit William any longer when he became so sick,

helpless, and poor as to render it probable, in his view, that he might lose something. William urged the necessity of his case—his former punctuality—the blessedness of assisting the needy, &c.; but he might as well have reasoned with the iron box that was said to contain the wealth of this worshipper of mammon—this mocker of God. All the answer William obtained was a positive refusal, and a peremptory request to send an inventory of his property, and confess judgment for the amount due. And it is a fact that this was eventually done; and property four times the value of the debt was placed in the storekeeper's power. William returned to his home and family, deeply laden with sorrow: he could only tell his wife what was done, and then retire to the little chamber where he was accustomed to pray in secret, and pour out his complaints to the Lord. And in his deepest distress the Lord blessed him, so that he praised God even in tribulation.

The winter wind howled and moaned round the cottage in tones so doleful that it seemed as if some utterly abandoned soul was giving utterance to the ravings of despair. The snow of December fell in large flakes, or was whirled about in eddies and drifts by the wind. Not a soul seemed to be stirring in the whole village; not a solitary traveller ventured to face the angry elements. The leaden hue of the clouds added to the dreariness of the scene; and the cottage of William Fagan was a scene of sorrow more dreary than that without. Isaac seemed sinking in death,—the meal and meat were nearly exhausted again: and William retired to pray to that God who hears his creatures' cry, and who sends supplies in the proper times. In the midst of the storm, the brother, of whom William had obtained assistance, drove his wagon to the door.—He entered, and a supply of flour and meat for the whole winter was brought in. With tears the family thanked the man whom God had made the instrument of their deliverance from want and all its woes. He heard the simple tale of their sorrows, and wept and prayed with them, and departed, filled with the glorious joy imparted by a good deed done for his heavenly Father.

It was on the same gloomy day that the boy Isaac called to his father and requested to be lifted up. The father took up his skeleton form, and held him upon his knees.

"Now let me look at the snow, father," said he.

William raised the child to the casement, and, after gazing wistfully a moment, he said,

"Now lay me down."

"My dear," said the full-hearted father, "are you willing to die, and go to God, and be among his angels?"

"Yes, father, I would rather go now."

Before this day he had seemed rather unwilling to die, when conversed with on the subject of death. The father laid him upon the little bed and turned to get a drink for him. Not a moment had scarcely elapsed, yet Isaac, the beloved boy, was dying in violent convulsions. The agonized father held him until the first fit was over. He looked as with the eye of angelic innocence, and said,

"Hold me, father, hold me!"

"I will hold my dying darling," said William.

"One more drink of water, father."

It was given, and the father held the child until kind neighbours came and took the task of watching that innocent sufferer for twelve hours, ere his spirit was dislodged from its clay tenement.

The mother, near to her confinement, was dreadfully agitated, and carried forcibly away from the dying boy; and as midnight's solemn hour witnessed the departure of Isaac's spirit, a son was *born* to that family. In that awful hour of deep feeling, when the living and the dead met in the same house, the father stood in awe, and said,

"It is the Lord; behold, God is mighty; let all fear and worship him."

The sun shone beautifully on the pure white snow the day after the death of Isaac. He lay like a waxen image of boyish beauty in his little coffin, and one after another of the neighbours came in, and the little playmates of Isaac walked up to the coffin, their serious looks indicating their sense of the solemnity of death. This was the day of burial. The procession formed; and at its head walked the white-headed minister that had often smiled upon the little boy about to be buried, and exhorted him to be good. He happened to be in the village that day, and stayed to improve the solemn occurrence. In a few minutes they reached the village graveyard, and the firstborn of William Fagan was placed in the grave, while the aged minister said a few solemn words, and prayed for the little boys and girls that stood around the grave, that they might be ready

to die also,—and for the parents, and for the afflicted family. And God's Spirit was there to bless the word, and to answer prayer. William returned home, more serious, it is true, but happier in his own mind, for he believed that God would always do right.

"I cannot bring the child back; I shall go to him," he said.

His wife endured the bereavement with a Christian woman's fortitude, and the cares of her infant served to occupy and divert her mind from the solemn scene. There was some stir among the church members, after the death scene had brought the state of the family to light, and many put their two widow's mites together in a quiet, Christian way, and made up a considerable sum of money. The third evening after the funeral a pious brother entered the cottage of Fagan, and, without insulting poverty by an ostentatious display of benevolence, presented the money the brethren had collected and sent by him. William received it as from God, but the storekeeper had no hand in the matter.

The winter had passed away, and the time of the singing of birds and the budding of flowers had come; and little Anna could play once more in the warm sunshine, or fondle her baby brother in the cradle. The mother, too, had assumed her wonted cheerfulness. Sometimes indeed a tear would fall, at the remembrance of the past, especially when she happened to take up some one of little Isaac's garments or one of his playthings; but it passed away, and she thought, "The Lord gave, and for wise purposes he hath taken away;" and she was comforted concerning her firstborn. The Christian father also again rejoiced in the goodness of God, as he remembered that in all his trials he had "come forth as gold;" and his brethren's esteem and respect for him increased. With pleasure he went about his usual employment, and hope cheered his toil with the promise of complete emancipation from debt and temporal difficulties. But in the midst of his dreams the adversary came in the person of his creditor, with the appalling cry, "Pay that thou owest me!" The miserly storekeeper had promised to give him time to pay the money when the judgment was given; but the whip was now in his own hand. Did he design to get possession of his debtor's property for the fourth of its value?

We will leave this question unanswered, as it is by actions we are to judge—God alone judging of motives.

William reasoned on the impropriety of the demand at that time.

"Why," asked the creditor, "is it not a just debt?—all I want is my own."

"Yes," replied William, "but justice untempered with mercy will be awarded to all such just men as you are. In the course of justice none of us should obtain salvation."

But the storekeeper was not to be moved. Like the inexorable Jew, he insisted upon "his just demand." It would have been hard for him to say,

> "That mercy I to others show,
> That mercy show to me."

William knew not what to do. A few days, if the money were not raised, would complete his temporal ruin. He did not rail at his brother. He added no reproach. The rebuke and the reproach came from other persons. Yet he did not despond: *he prayed to God.* As William returned to his house, on the evening of the last day, except one, of his respite from the fangs of the law, he was deeply musing on his prospects, and saw no way of deliverance, yet felt a strong degree of confidence that the Lord would point out some way for him. And a wealthy gentleman, who resided in a town about twenty miles from the village, was presented to his mind, and it seemed that the Spirit said, "Go to him." At first William reasoned thus:—

"I have but a slight acquaintance with that man. True, he knows me as a member of the church, but *he* is not a member. Nevertheless, he is universally beloved, as the benefactor and friend of the poor and friendless, if they are worthy." And it seemed still that the voice in his own mind said, "Go to him."

The next day, without consulting his companion, for it would have but added to her sorrow if he were disappointed, he told her he should not be at home until late in the evening.

He found a conveyance, and started. Many were his fears and hopes, as he rapidly rode toward the place of his friend; but still, when his heart was lifted up to the Lord, the impression remained with all its force. He reached the

house, and found Mr. ——— at home, and alone in his office. He was, by profession, an attorney. William was received courteously, and the state of his family and the church kindly inquired after. And then the gentleman asked if he could be of any service. William told the simple tale of his former comfortable circumstances, his sickness, and all the events which had occurred, even to the present painful difficulty about the debt. Mr. ——— was moved by the artless recital, and said,

"My good young friend, cheer up; we can soon remove that difficulty. I will give you a note to Mr. M———, your creditor, and stop his proceedings. You may come to my house in a week's time, and you shall have the means to settle the demand."

With tearful eyes William received the note to the village storekeeper; and with a soul full of love and gratitude to God, and God's instrument of deliverance, he rode rapidly home.

It was late when he arrived, and his anxious and wondering wife was watching his return; but how were all her fears turned to joy and praise to the Lord when the whole affair was made known to her!

With a light heart and a quick step William entered the store the next morning. He was received with a very cool "good morning." He handed Mr. ———'s note; but how did the countenance and manner of the creditor change when he read the communication!

"O! certainly; he takes the responsibility. Why, I did not know you were acquainted with Mr. ———. You know, Brother Fagan, we men of business must be strict in order to get along. I am very sorry I was obliged to use you in this manner; but it was in the way of business, you know. So, brother, you must forget and forgive."

"Arch hypocrite!" thought William, "how he brothers me now." And without remark he left the store and returned to his business.

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Though fortune frowned, and faithful friends were few,
Yet in the hour of trial *one* was true;
Unwavering faith to heaven wings its way,
And gains that good for which the pious pray;
And watchful memory wakes and brings the bliss
Of *that* blest hour, and throws it into *this*. *MS. Poems.*

The day was delightful. The balmy breezes of summer seemed to fill every thing in nature with renovated life and joyousness. The birds sang in the trees, which were clothed in livery of the richest verdure, with a force and feeling that penetrated the pious heart; and the green branches upon which the warblers perched, seemed, to the eye of piety, a faint symbol of the trees of paradise, where immortal fruits flourish, and where flowers never fade. The songs seemed like those inspiring strains which may be supposed to burst from those spirits of purity redeemed unto God, and seated among the sanctified in heaven, to be subject to the defilement of sin and the pangs of sorrow no more forever. The beasts of the field gambolled over the green meadows, as though delirious with delight, revelling in nature's rich and abundant provision. And man—creation's lord—the miniature of his mighty Maker—man participated in the general joy; for summer sat as queen among the seasons.

"Earth set forth her jewels to honour the queen;
Her buds, blossoms, fruits, and her loveliest flowers;
And the forest, arrayed in its mantle of green,
Sent homage in songs from its shadiest bowers."

It was a day of holy gladness to William Fagan. Mr. ——, his friend, had presented the amount of money necessary to pay the debt. It was given freely, without other security than a simple note, payable at a distant date, to be prolonged for years, if necessary. It was on this day that William returned from his friend's mansion, with the means of rescue from the grasp of the pitiless and rapacious wretch who was his creditor. The cottage of Fagan seemed, in the light and gladness of that day, to wear an appearance of more than usual neatness, comfort, and peace; and as he came nigh his heart was lifted to Heaven with feelings of unutterable gratitude to God, the faithful, unchangeable Friend of all who put their trust in him. The wife of William participated in the joy of her husband, and thanked God for opening a door of deliverance, and pointing out a

way where there seemed "no way." Even little Anna, though unable to comprehend the reason of her parents' rejoicing, was glad also, and laughed and jumped about with the greatest glee; and the baby boy, who sat upon the cottage floor, surrounded with broken flowers and other playthings, smiled and endeavoured to spring into the arms of his father. But cheering as was this scene, we must present another feature thereof, which rendered it more deeply interesting to the pious soul. It was this pious family kneeling before the Lord, while the father poured out his acknowledgments to his best Friend, and prayed for blessings on his earthly friend,—not forgetting that individual who needed prayer most of all—the *poor* rich storekeeper. This delightful scene was produced by one little act of friendship and liberality on the part of a man, almost a stranger to this family, who, actuated by feelings of humanity, stretched out his hand as God had given means, and relieved their distress. If this joy was theirs, what were the feelings of their benefactor? He knew that William was poor and his means limited, but he hesitated not. A stranger to similar deeds will never know the joy of such a deed. The pleasures of benevolence are only known to the benevolent heart. Covetousness, actuated by caution, may pass such scenes with a sneer, but charity rejoiceth in doing good. It may be said, "This was a trifle for a man of wealth to bestow." But how is it that such "trifles" are sometimes withheld from the truly worthy, who, poor and oppressed beneath the foot of the proud, send out their cries upon the winds of heaven? But even some of the pious rich heed them not. The cold-blooded caution that suffers a brother to want is detestable; and it is but covetousness in disguise; a demon, upon whose idolatrous altar souls are sacrificed.

The debt was paid to the inexorable merchant; and William was again at liberty to pursue his occupation, unmolested by duns and debts. No more visions of unmerciful creditors, or ruined hopes, haunted his nightly slumbers, nor obtruded upon his daily thoughts and devotional hours. Those acquainted with church affairs may inquire, "Why was not the conduct of this individual, the merchant, investigated?" It was. But he had used no "unchristian words," had indulged no "unchristian tempers," had violated no express "law," that would expel him from the com-

munion of the church; and therefore he went unpunished, save by the odium attached to his conduct. When the case and all the circumstances became known, the affair excited the wags of the village to nickname him "Shylock." With what justice this appellation was bestowed the day of eternity will disclose.

The next important business in the mind of William was some satisfaction to the brother who had, through storm, and snow, and cold, come to his relief, and brought provisions for his family. The family, in more prosperous days, did not forget their days of darkness and their last hard crust of mouldy bread. It served as a text for years, upon which the father of the family would expatiate, to show that the Lord still loves those whom he chasteneth, and sends deliverance in the distressing hour. Deeply mysterious as his ways may be, he is still good to all that call upon him. For,

> Deep in unfathomable mines
> Of never-failing skill,
> He treasures up his bright designs,
> And works his sovereign will."

Yes: and "all things work together for good to them that love God"—that are the "called according to his purpose." A thousand ways has Providence to bring his designs about; and in the end man will see that "there hath not any thing failed" of all that the Lord promised. Soon after the last event recorded William embraced the opportunity of visiting his kind brother in grace. He found him diligently engaged in the little farm he possessed; which, though barely sufficient to supply the wants of a large family, yet, by industry and frugality, was, with the blessings of God, a goodly heritage; and he was in the habit of doing more for the cause of God and the poor than many with four times his means. No application for assistance was by him rejected, no suppliant was ever turned empty away. He would divide his bread with the hungry, and his clothing with the naked; and the Lord blessed him "in his basket and in his store." His "soul was larger than his house or purse."

The conversation between William and his friend was of God and spiritual things, until the hour came for the visiter's departure. He then, in grateful terms, referred to his obligations to the brother, and wished to know what

sum would repay him. His friend looked at William for a moment, and said,

"Brother, I have charged that to the Lord. It was done at his command. You owe me nothing. He that lendeth to the Lord, you know, shall be repaid. I am poor, like yourself, but I had it to spare, and I could not shut up my bowels of compassion against a brother in need. But what is that between thee and myself? Go and do likewise, brother Fagan, when you meet one in distress."

He would not listen to thanks, but shaking William heartily by the hand, he said,

"Peace be with you, brother."

William could only thank God for this new instance of divine goodness, and he returned to bless God, and, like David, to bless his house.

The soft, clear light of a summer moon lay in silent radiance around the cottage. As William approached, his wife and little ones welcomed his coming; and their simple repast was sweetened by a recital of the goodness of God in *all* his dealings with them. The supper being over, a few neighbours dropped in, and a season of religious converse and worship followed. Prayer was offered in fervent faith, and the songs of Zion, in musical tones, ascended on the still night air like costly incense from the golden censer. Listening angels might have caught the strains, and, without a pause or blush, conveyed and presented to heaven's gracious Sovereign the "prayers and praises of these saints."

# No. XI.

## STRIKING COINCIDENCES.

BY RT. REV. B. B. SMITH,

RECTOR ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH, MIDDLEBURY, VT.

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LATE of a dreary winter's evening I was called upon to attend the last hours of a highly gifted young man in A——, Va., whom, for a short time, I had known as the betrothed of one of the most splendid young ladies in my parish, but over whose high promise of intellectual and professional distinction his friends had long been weeping, in the sad conviction that he was the victim of consumption. The night closed in darkly and drearily around the country mansion where we were sheltered from the storm, but all was peace and hope within. Suffering, blessed by the Spirit of God, had taught that young man the way to the Saviour. He had only time to express his hope, and I to commend his soul to God, before he peacefully closed his eyes, to open them upon such scenes no more forever.

Here I heard of the sudden and extreme illness of the father of his betrothed. A ride of some weary miles, the next morning, found me by the side of his sick-bed. What a scene! His herculean frame, which had endured the hardness of a good soldier through the whole of that eventful struggle which gave independence to the colonies, was supported erect by pillows. His manly and noble countenance was scarlet, almost to blackness, under the rage of the fever which consumed him. At every respiration his whole frame was perfectly convulsed. His trembling hand was penning his last will and testament. His agonized family were in tears around; and neighbours and domestics were hurrying to and fro in the utmost consternation. One intense anxiety filled the mind of the dying man—the adjustment of his affairs—the parting from his family. For a moment I endeavoured to direct his thoughts to more momentous themes, and to calm all hearts by the voice of prayer. Exhausted by emotion I quit the dwelling, so soon to be left desolate.

In a few days I pronounced the last offices of the church over this respected veteran, on the one bank of the little

stream upon which his beautiful mansion was built, on the afternoon of the same day upon which, in the morning, I had been engaged in the same service on the opposite side of the stream, over the remains of a companion in arms, born the same year, in sight of his father's house; who entered the army of the revolution with him, served to the end of the war in the same regiment, retired with him to neighbouring farms, lived near him on the most friendly terms to a good old age, was seized nearly at the same hour, with the same disease, which proved fatal to both within the same twenty-four hours; and they were interred the same day, by the same officiating clergyman, in graves so near that the notes of the mocking-bird above the grave of the one could be heard sweetly floating across the gentle stream, far beyond the spot where his companion in arms was laid in his long and honoured repose.

As I rode home, full of solemn reflections on the vanity of life, and on the wonderful ways of Him who holds its destinies in his hands, I was joined by a friend from a distant part of the county, who had rode many miles to pay his last respects to the more honoured of the departed. He spoke with deep emotion of his own religious hopes. On the next occasion of public worship, feeble in health as I was, I had travelled through a severe snow-storm eight miles, to meet an appointment at the venerable parish church in his neighbourhood, and the only person I found at the door was this same friend. I hardly knew how to interpret his first address to me, that, returning from the funeral the other day, he had thought of the text upon which he wished me to preach his funeral sermon. Simply remarking that he, vigorous as he then was in health, was far more likely to attend me to my grave, than I to solemnize his funeral rites, I nevertheless alighted, at his request, to consult the good old church Bible for chapter and verse. (Isa. xii. 2.) Upon recovering from a slight relapse, the result of this day's exposure, I received the sad notice that my services were required to commit the body of this beloved friend to the grave, which I did, after preaching in great weakness of body from the text prescribed. All this was the more remarkable, as this friend was the very first person to welcome me, even before landing, to the house of his father-in-law, whose funeral sermon I preached exactly four Sundays after that on which I had been welcomed at landing to his hospitable roof. Such are parts of the ways of *God*.

# No. XII.

## THE MORAL INFLUENCE OF POPULAR DESCRIPTIONS OF BATTLE SCENES.

BY MARCUS E. CROSS.

In speaking of the moral influence of descriptions of battle scenes, we might bring to view their influence on a nation's morality. We might show that they breathe a spirit, and inculcate sentiments which are calculated to shed a blighting influence over piety, and impart to their votary a hardihood of spirit which can look upon human suffering with cold indifference.

But we choose to pass over this and other kindred views of the subject, and confine ourselves to the illustration of this simple truth,—Descriptions of battle scenes create and foster a warlike spirit.

Perhaps it may be pertinent here to premise, that we do not deny but that these descriptions, given as they should be, may exert a beneficial moral influence, and encourage the mild principles of the Prince of peace. When presented in their true colours, they represent them as the theatres upon which are acted out all that is *dark*, *malignant*, and *cruel* in human feelings and fiendish in human purpose. They present human nature in an aspect, compared with which, the most savage beasts that roam the forest and the deadliest reptiles that crawl upon the earth may well be esteemed innocent. For the former can den together on terms of friendship, and the latter never seek the destruction of their species. But man, with shame be it said, in a military aspect, exults in shedding the blood of his fellow, and reaps from it, instead of merited infamy, a harvest of immortal laurels!

Viewed in this light, the soul recoils with horror from the bloody scene. But we claim that these descriptions, as they are usually given in the wildness of poetic license, and even in the more sober delineations of history, carry a false impression to the mind of the reader. In these, poetry lends all her charms, genius and eloquence all their magic power, to portray the hero on the battle field, not as he

should be, as the ruthless murderer of his species, but as a glorious champion worthy the oaken garland, or "prima hederæ victricis premia."

Our position that these descriptions increase a warlike spirit, is sustained, first, from the consideration that they make warriors. The passion for glory exerts an influence on the human mind paramount to almost any other. It would seem, by reading the recitals of battles, that glory could be acquired only by valorous daring on the field of battle. In these descriptions, as they are usually sketched by the hand of misguided genius, every thing is calculated to create an illusion for the youthful mind,—to dispel the horrors of war by the glory of the parade, and the attractive splendour of the attendant circumstances.

In such recitals, one sees all that is alluring in the battle in miniature, while all that is sickening to refined and elevated feelings is carefully concealed. He sees the two armies drawn up in battle array. An emotion of sublimity comes over the mind as he gazes upon these bannered legions with nodding plumes, streaming banners, and burnished steel,—as he drinks in the strains of martial music, and hears the thunder of cannon. While death is thickening along the ranks of the conflicting armies, the groans of the dying are hushed, and all the horrifying barbarities of the scene—an adequate report of which the judgment-day alone can unfold—are thrown into the shade by other considerations. After successive charges, one of the armies shouts the pæan of victory. The victorious general is crowned with laurels. He marches into his native city under triumphal arches, greeted with thunders of applause. Poets sing his praises, and a monument of eternal granite tells his name to future generations.

How many a youth, while reading such descriptions, has soliloquized, "This is the orbit in which I will move to draw around my memory a posthumous glory." He burns for the hero's distinction, and a place in the recollections of posterity for his valorous daring, and coolness, and presence of mind in the foremost of the chivalrous combatants. Many examples of the influence which we have portrayed on youthful minds might be presented. Only one I will cite, and that is the hero in whose presence it is said that the world was awed to silence. Alexander's quenchless thirst for martial glory was first created by reading Homer's

Iliad. In this, he found a mirror in which was reflected the world of battle and heroes in glowing colours. Homer struck a chord that vibrated in unison with the primitive feelings of man.

Our position is sustained further, from a consideration of the national character these descriptions are fitted to produce.

A nation's character will partake much of the nature of its literature. This is a kind of thermometer by which the character of an enlightened community, nay its very morality, may be determined. Lycurgus understood this when he directed all his efforts to make the Spartans a nation of warriors. To effect this, he regarded it as an object of primary importance to introduce to the people the Poems of Homer. They were delighted with his delineations of the warrior, and determined to be warriors.

How extensively must a warlike spirit be created and cherished in that community, where there is a free circulation of that literature which chants in inspiring strains the glories of war, though the pathway of the conqueror be paved with human bones, and crimsoned with human gore; which sets up as models for imitation blood-thirsty warriors, and makes human nature most glorious when most skilful in human butchery; especially, when we consider that these descriptions are written with all the fascinations of poetic imagery and emotion.

Thus written, they enter the *memory*, they seize hold of the *feelings*, the *soul* of the nation. It gradually acquires a fixed warlike character. This developes itself in scouting the idea of redressing any national grievance but by the blood of its foe,—in feeling a national insult with such extreme sensibility, that whenever the least cause of disaffection arises, either from internal or external causes, with a recklessness of consequences, it is ready to rush at once to deeds of carnage and blood. In such a community, the aspiring chieftain has only to blow the trumpet of war, and the mild arts of peace give way to the clangor of arms and the horrors of bloody revolution. France furnishes a melancholy example of such a national character. We see it breaking out in revolutions. We recognise it on the plains of Waterloo in the destruction of one of the most gallant armies that ever ravaged Europe.

Our own nation has too much of the same spirit, created, in a great measure, we apprehend, by our warlike literature.

## No. XIII.

## THE GLORY OF THE SAVIOUR CONTRASTED WITH THAT OF EARTHLY CONQUERORS.

BY R. BABCOCK, D. D.

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Do you understand clearly in what the Saviour's glory consists? You have many times heard him called a great captain, a mighty conqueror; and these are his true appellations. The danger is, that your mind will be led to associate with this character of the Redeemer, that kind of glory of which the captains and conquerors of earth are usually so emulous. I beg of you, therefore, to notice the wide difference between them.

These ambitious leaders among men are often seen,—as Jesus was on this occasion,—drawing near to a certain city. They, too, are followed by a multitude, but it is not a peaceful and humble train, crying Hosanna to the Son of David. No: they lead forth bands of armed warriors, maddened by excitement, enraged as far as possible against those whom they had never seen, and ready to imbrue their hands in the blood of their fellow-men. For what purpose do these captain-generals, with their beleaguering hosts, come near to that city? Why, they come there to make widows more numerous and more wretched! They come not to give life or spare life; but to take the lives, especially of young men, away; to make the hearts of survivors throb with anguish more intolerable, and to cause their tears more copiously and bitterly to flow.

When was it ever found consistent with *their glory* to comfort the widow, to wipe away her tears, to spare for life and usefulness the dying son?

Now when you contrast the conduct of the Saviour, in this instance, with theirs, are you not constrained to feel that His is the higher glory? Would it not be a source of

more pure and lasting joy to you, to have imitated the benevolence and compassion of the Son of God, than, with those so unlike him, to wade through tears and blood, to grasp the fleeting honours which deck the warrior's brow? Talk as men will in the mad rage of their infatuated ambition, there is more true glory in goodness than in what has been too long miscalled greatness. And this is the glory of our Lord: He is mighty to save. His power indeed is infinite; but in his embassy to our lost world it was all put forth, not to destroy, but to heal,—to make alive. He came to cheer the saddened heart, to calm the fearful, troubled spirit, to give peace to the wretched soul, and sure, free pardon, with hope eternal, to the guilty and the dying.

While your thoughts dwell on these favours which he bestows, do not lose sight of another peculiarity which distinguishes the glory of the Saviour. Other leaders gain their high renown by the blood and sufferings of their subordinate followers, who frequently remain unnoticed and unknown. Without pain or personal exposure, they build up the splendid celebrity of their name and honours by the toils and sacrifices of thousands and millions of their fellowmen. O how unlike the character of the Captain of our salvation! who "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

It is his glory that he spares his followers, and for them fights the battles, receives the wounds and death, and procures the triumph and victory, and then freely welcomes them to share with Him its infinite bliss. How unalloyed the purity, how self-sacrificing the methods and instrumentalities,—how diffusive and free the benevolence of the Saviour's glory!

# No. XIV.

## EVIDENCE OF THE EXISTENCE OF GOD, FROM THE LIGHT OF NATURE.

BY MARCUS E. CROSS.

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The existence of God is the fundamental principle of natural and revealed religion. It is the broad and deep foundation on which Christianity erects her fair and symmetrical superstructure. Admit this truth, and we have an object of adoration and thanksgiving worthy the supreme homage of the immortal mind: then the Bible is not a dream; then the universe is governed by infinite wisdom and power. But to deny it would introduce greater darkness and confusion in the moral world, than in the natural to blot the sun from the material universe.

There are two methods of argumentation to prove the existence of God, viz.: the necessary nature of our ideas, and the structure of the universe. They are both predicated on one common principle or idea, that every effect, or every thing that begins to be, must trace its origin to some adequate source or cause. The former of these methods is technically denominated, the argument *a priori;* and the latter, the argument *a posteriori;* or, in other words, the one is the scientific and metaphysical method, and the other the popular method. The argument *a priori* infers the effect from the cause. It supposes that in the nature of things, and from the necessity of the case, something must have existed prior and antecedent to all other beings and *things*, whose existence is predicated from the existence of that first cause.

The argument *a posteriori* infers the cause from the effect, and proves the existence of God from the exhibitions of intelligence and power in the works of creation. It is an ascending process, rising from effects to their causes. It is a far more natural, simple, and conclusive method of proving this truth than the argument *a priori;* which, it must be confessed, requires a great degree of mental

acumen to comprehend the reasoning without great mental abstraction and laborious effort.

The existence of God may be proved *a priori* by the following method: It may be assumed as an undeniable position, that either there has always existed an unchangeable, independent being, from whom all other beings derived their origin; or else there has been an infinite succession of changeable, dependent beings, produced one from another in an endless succession. We need only examine the idea of an eternal succession to perceive its futility and absolute impossibility. The infinite progression of one entire, endless series of beings can have no cause of existence foreign from itself; because in it are supposed to be all things that are, or ever were, in the universe. Nor can it derive its existence from any thing *within* itself; because no one being in this infinite succession is supposed to be self-existent, or necessary, but every one dependent on the foregoing. An infinite succession, therefore, of mere dependent beings, without any original, independent cause, is a series of beings that has neither necessity nor cause of existence either *within* or *without* itself. It amounts, therefore, to an absurd contradiction, and is utterly impossible. It supposes something to be caused, and yet it is caused absolutely by nothing. We may, in view of this position, adopt the language of the poet:—

> "Had there e'er been naught, naught still had been;
> Eternal these must be."

To suppose an infinite succession of changeable beings, produced one from another in an endless progression, without any original cause at all, is only to push back the inquirer from one step to another, in order to evade the main point at issue, viz. the original cause of all things.

"Suppose," says an ingenious author, "a chain hung down out of the heavens from an unknown height; and though every link of it gravitated towards the earth, and what it hung upon was not visible; yet it did not descend, but kept its situation; and upon this a question should arise, What supported or kept the chain? would it be a sufficient answer to say, that the first or lowest link hung upon the second, or that next above it; the second, or rather the first and second, upon the third; and so on *ad infinitum?* For what holds up the whole? A chain of ten links would

fall down unless something able to bear it hindered. One of twenty, if not stayed by something of a yet greater strength in proportion to the increase of weight; and therefore one of infinite links certainly, if not sustained by something infinitely strong, and capable of bearing up an infinite weight. And thus it is in a chain of causes and effects tending or gravitating towards some end; the last or lowest depends, or is suspended upon the cause above it. This again, if it be not the first cause, is suspended upon a still higher one. And if they should be infinite, unless there is some cause upon which all hang or depend, they would be but an *infinite* effect, without an efficient. And to say there is any such thing would be as great an absurdity as to say a finite or *little weight* wants something to sustain it, but an infinite one, or the greatest, does not."

From the foregoing reasoning, we see the necessity of referring the existence of all things to an original, independent, first cause. The being that has created all other beings must have existed from eternity; must be *self-existent*. The true idea of self-existence is the idea of a being the supposition of whose not existing is an express contradiction. Whatever exists must have come into being out of *nothing*, or it must have been produced by an external cause, or it must be self-existent. If there had ever been a time when no being existed, there would have been no reason why any being ever should have existed. We cannot conceive it possible for any thing to be produced from *nothing*. This was the sentiment of the ancients, and alike consonant with reason and common sense.

To have been produced by an external cause cannot possibly be true of all things. But something must have existed originally to produce other things. Something must have existed *eternally* and independently. The original then of all things must be self-existent—must exist by an absolute necessity in the thing itself. This self-existent, eternal being cannot be matter, or the material universe.

The great point in dispute between atheists and theists is, Whether the eternal being is possessed of intelligence and power. There are many atheists who are willing to admit that something has existed from eternity. The followers of Epicurus, while they maintained that the universe is formed by the fortuitous concourse of atoms, felt the

necessity of admitting that atoms had moved in infinite space from eternity. The ancient Hylozoists ascribed life and understanding to matter, whereby it formed itself into regular systems. Some modern atheists acknowledge a sort of necessary perception in the deity; meaning by the deity the universal substance, as they call it; that is, the entire system of *things*.

We wish to combat directly the idea of atheists, that matter can be self-existent. Now, to suppose matter self-existent, it must be an absurdity to suppose its non-existence or annihilation, or to suppose it changeable, or capable of existing in any other state or form. But we are sensible that though philosophy has not found out a method of annihilating matter, yet it is easy to conceive of its annihilation. We are certain, also, that matter undergoes numerous changes and revolutions. Whatever is self-existent must be immutable in its nature; it must exist from necessity. But when we contemplate matter—its *form*, its *motion*, the *whole*, or a *part*—they are all extremely fluctuating, arbitrary, and dependent. Matter then cannot be the eternal, self-existent being.

From the foregoing reasoning we deduce the following conclusions:—That something has existed from eternity; that that eternal being cannot be matter or the universe, and that, therefore, there is a God, underived, self-existent, the Author of all things that exist.

I have already partially anticipated a very conclusive argument, which I will state more distinctly in this connexion. The foundation of this argument is the existence of ourselves and other parts of the universe. We have a positive knowledge and consciousness of our existence, and of the existence of other parts of the universe, derived from the incontrovertible evidence of our senses. Here are facts which are unquestionable to our minds, and if ten thousand atheists should deny them, it would not in the least invalidate to our minds this palpable evidence. We therefore conclude that something has existed from eternity; for nothing is clearer, than that if we could conceive of a time when no being existed, it would have been impossible that we or any other beings should have existed. Beings could not make themselves, nor could they have sprung up by chance, for chance is merely a term expressive of our ignorance of the cause. It is therefore clear, from the fact of our own exist-

ence, that something must have existed from eternity, sufficiently wise and powerful to produce the mighty effects which we see in the universe.

Our next is a *posteriori* argument, founded on the proofs of design and contrivance in the universe.

It is a dictate of plain common sense, and a sentiment entitled to universal credence, that where there are clear and incontestible marks of design, there must have been a designer, possessing intelligence adequate to the production of the effect or design in question. It is impossible for any one to survey the visible creation with any degree of care, without perceiving marks of design, ends aimed at, and means employed to accomplish those ends. We need not go beyond our *simple selves* to trace the clearest evidences of infinite wisdom. Take the eye, for instance, and compare it with the *telescope*. There is nothing in the telescope to assist vision, which we do not find still more curious in the eye. There is just as good evidence that the eye was made for vision, as there is that the telescope was made to assist it. They are made on the same *principles*, both being adjusted to the laws by which the transmission and refraction of rays of light are regulated. The ear, too, exhibits the same evidence of its being designed as an organ of conveying sound. The lungs are adapted to respiration ; the stomach for the reception and digestion of food ; the arteries and veins for conveying the blood from the heart to every extremity of the system ; the nerves to propagate feeling and motion. So perfect is the evidence of design, and contrivance, and of adaptedness of means to ends in these, and in innumerable other instances, that we might with far less absurdity suppose millions of alphabetical characters to fall of themselves into a well written poem ; or that all the pictures in a gallery of paintings were produced by a few random brushes from the hand of a mere tyro in the fine arts ; or that this great city of the *immortal Penn*, with its regular streets, its splendid and stately structures ; its dwellings furnished with taste and elegance, sprung into existence spontaneously, without a directing mind, than to suppose these works of nature were not the product of infinite intelligence and design.

If we observe the heavenly bodies, the evidences of a designing, directing mind, are very apparent and luminous. The *order*, the *variety*, the *uniformity*, the *beauty*, and the

*harmony* of the heavenly bodies, all speak most eloquently of infinite wisdom and power. Order, heaven's first law, reigns amid all the complexity of the heavenly spheres, and no discordant notes jar or grate on the ear to disturb its unceasing *music*. We observe, too, evidence of design, in the agreeable and *immense variety* resulting from the form of those bodies, and the laws by which they are governed. In the daytime, the sun illuminates all things, and presents to us a spectacle of unequalled *grandeur*. At night, the sun is withdrawn, and numberless lesser lights, and the moon with her pale, borrowed light, appear. The diurnal revolution of the earth produces the variety occasioned by night and day, and its annual revolution, that occasioned by the *seasons*. The evidences of design are no less striking in the *uniformity* of the operations of nature. The laws of design are limited, and in the same circumstances will always produce the same effects: but chance is fickle, it has no laws, no rule of operation, if it can operate at all. The laws of nature are uniform. The heavens have the same aspect *now* that they had when we first gazed upon them. The sun, the moon, and the stars, hold their places, and move on in their appointed courses without the least infraction of the laws that govern them. The planets, retaining their orbits by an invisible agency, perform their revolutions from age to age, in circles, emblematical of eternity, dispensing light and heat from the inexhaustible fountain to the extremities of the solar system. Whence originated those laws of *uniformity* in the midst of such *variety*, if not from an infinite mind?

If we contemplate the τὸ ἐν καὶ κάλλως of the ancients, the regular, the beautiful, and the harmonious in nature, we must irresistibly be conducted to a similar conclusion. There is no region in the universe within the range of our knowledge,—the heavens, the earth, the sea; no being into whose structure we inquire, but what exhibits a beautiful design—a perfect adaptedness to some end; a skill and artifice in its internal workmanship, that throws altogether into the shade the most masterly exhibitions of human art. Well may we adopt the eloquent language of Brown:—"The universe is but a spectacle of relations adapted to certain ends. From the greatest masses that roll through space, to the slightest atom that forms one of its imperceptible

tible elements, every thing is conspiring to some *design*. It is one universal design, or an infinity of *designs!*"

So convincing is the argument for the existence of Deity in the works of nature, that the reason why it does not strike us with irresistible force and admiration, is its *commonness* and our familiarity with it. Our knowledge of these works is acquired by such slow degrees, and its acquisition hindered by so many interruptions, that a great proportion of its effect is lost upon us. The immortal Cowper understood this when he said:

——— "Should God again,
As once in Gibeon, interrupt the race
Of the undeviating and punctual sun,
How would the world admire! But speaks it less
An agency divine, to make him know
His moment, when to sink, and when to rise,
Age after age, than to assist his course?
All we behold is miracle, but seen
So duly, all is miracle in vain."

If a view of the universe were to burst suddenly upon us, after the full development of our *reason*, we should be *awed* by the unrivalled grandeur of the spectacle; we should not hesitate a moment to acknowledge that the wisdom and power of the Creator are stamped in lines of eternal brightness on all his works. Nay, if we could see the visible hand of Deity inscribing in blazing *capitals* on the arches of the sky,—

"The hand that made us is *divine!*
Nature is but a name for an effect,
Whose cause is God,"

it would scarcely exhibit a clearer trace of their divine origin, than would be seen in those very works themselves. We should be incapable of refusing our homage to the eternal Being, whose wisdom had planned, and whose power had produced a system of such magnitude and grandeur. We should be ready to unite in the exclamation of the immortal bard:

"And yet was every faltering tongue of *man*,
Almighty Father! silent in thy *praise;*
Thy works themselves would raise a general voice,
Even in the depths of solitary woods,
By human foot untrod, proclaim thy power,
And to the choir celestial, *Thee* resound,
Th' eternal *cause*, support, and end of all!"

My next argument will be deduced from the general consent of mankind. There is a general concurrence among all nations in the belief of a Supreme Being, thus indicating either that there is an idea of God implanted in the human mind by nature, or that it is a sentiment so readily acquired from the works of creation, and so congenial to the mind, that its acquisition becomes intuitive and universal.

These concurrent sentiments of men point to truth and utility. We prove the *universality* of this concurrence from the history of man. It will be generally conceded on all hands, that this truth is admitted by all nations and individuals, so far as human investigation has extended, with only a few exceptions. No nation can be found, or tribe of human beings, not even the Indians of the western wilds, or the savage Hottentot, but what has some ideas of a Supreme Being or Great Spirit, who presides over the affairs of the universe. These ideas are more or less correct and consonant with reason and Scripture, in proportion to the degree of knowledge and refinement in the nation in question.

It does not invalidate this *position*, that there are some atheists who deny the existence of God. For in the first place, it is not certain that they do really believe as they pretend. And, in the second place, if they do believe it, it only teaches this valuable lesson, that the human mind may be so poisoned by sophistry, so depraved by error, and so blinded by prejudice, as to almost blot out some of its original sentiments.

Nor does it weaken the argument to assert that some tribes have been found utterly destitute of ideas of God and religion. For such assertions have generally been made on quite insufficient evidence. They have generally been made by persons incompetent to judge correctly and impartially. Their opinions have been founded upon mere hearsay, and the reports of more enlightened and wary travellers have pronounced them unjust and unfounded. But admitting the truth of these opinions, it does not materially weaken the argument, for it is readily conceded that there may be human beings found whose reason is almost obliterated, and who differ but little in intellectual capacity from the brutes. These may be unaffected by truths, readily apprehended and felt by every reflecting mind.

It cannot be denied, but that even the grossest idolaters

have universally admitted the general principle that there is a nature superior to man, whose wisdom and power have arranged the universe in its present form. The Greeks and Romans had their Ζεὺς and Jupiter; described by the latter as *hominum Sator, atque Deorum.* I cannot express my views clearer on this point than in the nervous language of Cicero. "What nation is there, or race of men, which does not entertain some notion of God prior to instruction? When, therefore, this opinion is not established by instruction, or custom, or law, and all without exception firmly assent to it, it is necessary to understand that there are gods, since we have implanted knowledge of them. It is necessary that that in which all agree should be true."

The existence of God may receive further collateral evidence from the *history* of human affairs; from numerous instances of retributive justice, indicating an invisible Judge; from miracles and prophecy, assuming the facts proved by the evidence of history; from the terror and dread which wound men's consciences when guilty of crimes which other men do not know, as in the case of Nero, Domitian and others, endeavouring to persuade themselves and others that there is no God.

In conclusion, I may say, we may rejoice in the truth of the proposition, "There is a God," and also in the luminousness of the evidence to support that proposition, aside from revelation. "There *is* a God, and therefore night is clothed with a starry garb and distils on our eyelids the blessings of repose; and day comes with the rod of its power unveiling the face of nature and opening the sources of joy. There *is* a God, and therefore love still warms our spirits, and animates us yet more and more. There *is* a God of the *present*, and therefore our earth runs its course through the heavens, and marks its periods of revolution, until the purposes of beneficence are accomplished. There *is* a God of the *future* inhabiting eternity, and never shall the light of his countenance cease to smile on creation until the voice from his throne is heard to diffuse a happiness through the ranks of the righteous, "which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived;" and to thunder the terrors of his avenging law on the ears of his guilty foes.

## No. XV.

### SEAMEN THE BEST MISSIONARIES.

It is a feature of the church in the present day, that great exertions are made to spread abroad the savour of Christ's name among the heathen: our missionaries are sent forth to evangelize the world, but we frustrate their efforts to a very considerable extent, if we do not labour to evangelize the seamen who convey them. Seamen will of course be looked upon as samples of religion: and it is not to be wondered at, that the heathen should prefer their own superstitions, when they witness the cruelties, profanities, and debaucheries of those who profess and call themselves Christians. It must run thus in the mind of a reflecting savage, "These men are brethren; so their complexion, language, and manners declare, and one of them is a teacher of religion: we may judge, then, from his companions, what is the nature and excellence of the religion he teaches, and wherein it excels our own;" but if it be objected that his companions have not received his religion, it will very naturally be suggested to the mind of the savage, "but if these men, who are in every respect so much better qualified to judge of its merits, reject the Christian religion, how can it be expected that we should embrace it?"

It is, alas! a too well established fact, that our own seamen are among the most inveterate enemies the gospel meets with in those countries. Heathenism favours licentiousness, Christianity forbids it: therefore, these men are angry with its holy interference, and endeavour to excite opposition against it, and render its ministers contemptible.

The great obstacles which the religion of our crucified Lord meets with in the world, are to be found in the ungodly lives of those who profess his name; in the opposition which the gospel encounters in Christian countries, (so called,) there is a mixture of strength; its enemies are its professed friends; it is the opposition of creed and prac-

tice, of the belief and of the life, that wounds the very vitals of Christianity among ourselves: the arguments with which our holy religion is foiled and stripped of her glory here, are drawn from the character and conduct of those who profess to believe in her divinity, and the whole amount of her failure is charged upon those who "having the form of godliness, deny the power thereof."

But send the gospel to the heathen accompanied only by men who have experienced and can illustrate its saving power; men who can say, each one for himself, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth:" men, that can illustrate that power in their tempers and conduct, and in the whole uniform tenor of a renewed and sanctified life; to whom your missionaries can point as proofs, that "whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report," are the natural and spontaneous fruits of the religion of Jesus Christ, and then shall we see a nation born at once, and those parts of the earth bring forth in one day. Behold how swift the progress, how rapid the triumphs of the gospel, thus accompanied by evidence of its truth and divinity, and encountering nothing but the darkness and weakness (we say, for that which is wholly evil, is essential weakness) of idolatry, rapid as the triumphs of morning over the gloom of night, swift as the headlong torrent over the bending osier.

And is not this the way to bring on the latter-day glory? for if whole nations of ignorant, idolatrous, vicious heathens were thus brought under the light and influence of the gospel, and were thus made to exhibit to the world the power, and spirituality, and glory of Christianity, would not this do more to overthrow the skepticism, and infidelity, and formality that have overrun Christendom, than any thing else would do.

There are traits in the character of a seaman essential to that of a missionary: their benevolence is great; they have long been proverbial for generosity; the pure element on which they live seems to have engendered it; just as the pestilential vapour of large cities, in which men are so crowded together, that they seem to fancy they may be excused for living upon one another, appears to engender avarice, and covetousness, and fraud, and injustice, and

oppression, and the other forms of robbery. But generosity, especially a seaman's generosity, is a quality very distinct from benevolence and beneficence; they are the legitimate offspring of Christianity, but it is astonishing what a much more healthy appearance they bear when found grafted upon a disposition naturally generous.

Nor are seamen wanting in zeal; and they have withal a brave fearlessness, which is of singular service in a good cause. O, how has Christianity suffered from the timidity and cowardice of some of its professors!—but cowardice and seamen are terms that cannot be associated; his constant exposure to peril seems to have given to the mariner a kind of constitutional bravery; he is reckless of consequences in the pursuit of his favourite passion, and he has learned to laugh at that which would fill the stoutest heart with fear. He whose very sport it is to wrestle with the elements, and with coolest intrepidity to face a thousand forms of most appalling danger, and cut his way through the very jaws of death—who sings his careless song amidst the tempest's wildest rage, and fearlessly mans the yards when the ship lies on her beam-ends—he possesses perhaps the truest sort of courage uninspired by Heaven.

Now send these bold, courageous, zealous, generous men abroad; and what will be the result? Nay, you do send them! Where is the port that is not visited by seamen? where is the shore that bears not the print of their feet? But, alas! they are not Christian seamen; their good qualities have not been sanctified and pressed into the service of religion; the soil of heathen lands is stained with their crimes; they have made our holy religion to stink in the nostrils of the heathen. But let them be converted, and every seaman who leaves our ports will be the world's missionary. O! this *will* be scattering the precious seed with a liberal hand, and over a wide space truly—this will be pressing into the service of the gospel a mighty host of men, whose adaptation to the work of extending Messiah's kingdom is greater than is by many imagined.

To convert a seamen is to do far more towards evangelizing the world, than to convert almost any other man: for a landsman has comparatively few opportunities of advocating the gospel; small is the circle through which his benevolence may range; circumscribed within the limits of the

town or neighbourhood in which he dwells, few comparatively are the individuals with whom he, through the course of his whole life, comes in contact; and against his contracted labours lies the whole force of that discouraging truth, "a prophet is not without honour, save in his own country." But that which applies with so discouraging a force against a landsman, applies in the same ratio of encouragement to the seaman; for he has no country, no location, before him; the whole population of the teeming earth passes, and people of every colour and of every clime are his neighbours, with whom he keeps up a constant correspondence; the opportunities therefore presented to him of diffusing abroad the savour of Christ's name, are such as are presented to no other man living.

And let us not forget that seamen have souls to be saved. If there be one class of men more than another that have claims on the whole community, it is seamen: by their means a thousand of the luxuries, a thousand of the conveniences of life are procured—the clothes we wear, and the food we eat, in part come to us by this channel; and how many are the privations which they endure, who sail around the earth to minister to our gratification and comfort.

Think of the pains of an apprenticeship to this perilous calling—think of the stripling torn from the side of a tender mother, and driven aloft on a stormy night—see him clinging with frost-bitten fingers to the cold wet shrouds, while the sweeping blast, as it gathers around his frighted form, threatens to fling him far on the angry main, and the dashing spray, as it blinds his eyes, makes him think the billows are climbing after him to destroy him. Think of his agony and terror, brought from the lap of his mother to be cradled in that storm, aloft on the reeling mast, while the wind, as it whistles in the rigging, in his idea makes cruel sport of his sorrow.

But religion would prove an ægis to preserve him; religion would administer strong consolation and powerful support under the privations and perils to which he is exposed; it would break sweetly in upon the monotony of his life, and throw over every day that sacred, joyous charm, which the grace of heaven only can impart.

Give then to the mariner religion—that religion which is salvation—salvation from his fears—salvation from his vices!

THE END.

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